



Sonoma  
County  
General Plan







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**Sonoma County General Plan**

**INTRODUCTION**

**March 23, 1989**

**Revised to Reflect Amendments  
and Corrections as of April 9, 1991**

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

IN RE: [illegible]

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March 23

March 23

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## INTRODUCTION

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## **1.0 AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE**

### **1.1 AUTHORITY FOR THE GENERAL PLAN**

Statutory authority for a general plan is expressed in Title 7, Division 1 of the Government Code of the State of California. Article 5, Section 65300 et seq requires the county to adopt a comprehensive general plan to guide its future physical development. The plan may recognize local conditions in a format that is appropriate for the local agency. Although the general plan must address a number of different subjects and elements, the county may choose the degree of specificity and level of detail that is appropriate for its circumstances.

### **1.2 REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ELEMENTS**

The general plan must contain a statement of development policies, including diagrams or maps and text, setting forth objectives, principles, standards, and plan proposals. Seven mandatory elements are land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety.

A number of optional elements are allowed. This general plan includes three optional elements: Agricultural Resources, Air Transportation, and Public Facilities and Services.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

The Sonoma County General Plan is a revision of the previous general plan which was adopted in 1978, and supercedes and replaces that document. This plan carries forward the major goals and policy framework of the 1978 Plan, but changes the format in several ways. A major purpose of the revised plan is to take into consideration the changes in conditions and circumstances that have occurred since 1978, and to express policies in a manner that will simplify their interpretation, administration, and application to individual development decisions. The intent of the plan is that policies, guidelines, and standards be clear and direct so that property owners and citizens may easily understand its provisions and how they apply to parcels of land as well as their cumulative impact on future environmental conditions and quality of life.

The broad purpose of the Sonoma County General Plan is to express policies which will guide decisions on future growth, development, and conservation of resources through 2005 in a manner consistent with the goals and quality of life desired by the county's residents. Under State law many actions on private land development, such as specific plans, area plans, zonings, subdivisions, public agency projects and other decisions must be consistent with the general plan. The goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the plan will be applied in a manner to insure their constitutionality.

## **2.0 REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT**

### **2.1 THE REGIONAL SETTING**

Sonoma County, the most northerly of the nine counties in the San Francisco Bay Region, is located along the Pacific coastline about forty miles north of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. The county is just over 1500 square miles, making it the largest of the nine Bay Area counties. Its 1986 population of about 339,000 ranked sixth among these nine counties. The county's location in the regional setting is shown in Figure IG-1 on page 3.

Sonoma County is bordered by the Pacific Ocean on the west, Marin County and San Pablo Bay to the south, Solano, Napa and Lake Counties to the east, and Mendocino County to the north. Because of the geographic configuration and topography of the Northbay area, transportation linkages to adjacent counties are limited to a few routes. The U.S. Highway 101 Freeway is the major north-south route, connecting the county to San Francisco and Marin to the south and to Mendocino on the north.



## 2.2 THE COUNTY SETTING

Sonoma County's 1500 square miles include a diverse mosaic of landforms, environments, and human settlements. The broad, flat Santa Rosa Plain, which lies between the Sonoma Mountains on the east and low coastal hills on the west, contains the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Cotati. The sparsely settled western margin of the county, along the Pacific coastline, includes the redwood and mixed conifer forests of the Mendocino Highlands in the north and rolling oak-studded hills, dairylands, and coastal prairies in the south. The Mayacmas Range forms the eastern boundary of the county. Along with the Sonoma Mountain range, it encloses the Sonoma Valley or "Valley of the Moon," a scenic agricultural valley which extends from near Santa Rosa southeastward to the city of Sonoma and the marshlands of San Pablo Bay. In the north, the Mayacmas Range and Mendocino Highlands enclose the Alexander and Dry Creek Valleys. In the far northeast, the remote interior of the Mayacmas Range contains the Geysers geothermal steam field.

The County's eight cities, Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Healdsburg, Sonoma, Sebastopol, Cotati, and Cloverdale, contained a combined population of just under 200,000 in 1986, about 58 percent of the total population of 339,000. Santa Rosa, the largest city, had nearly 100,000 residents. The 140,000 residents in unincorporated areas were concentrated in urban areas located just outside several cities, notably Santa Rosa and Sonoma, and in a number of rural communities. These communities varied substantially in their character, and their diversity and quaintness contribute to the quality of life that is desired by many residents.

## 2.3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING COORDINATION

The Sonoma County General Plan is generally compatible with the plans of the eight cities, and with plans or policies established by other governmental agencies. Areas for future expansion of the cities were coordinated with the various cities. Although the County's plan does not regulate development within the cities, it is applicable to lands within their spheres of influence. In some instances, the policies of the plan establish larger "areas of interest" for cities, in order to provide for their review and comment on proposed county actions.

The plan also considers the policies and concerns of adjacent counties and regional agencies, such as the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District, the Bay Area Water Quality Control Board, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Sonoma County Water Agency, and others. The text of the various elements notes those situations where these agencies have particular responsibilities that affect the physical development of the county and approval of permits.

## 3.0 ORGANIZATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN

### 3.1 THE PLAN FORMAT

The general plan consists of the 10 elements and this Introduction:

- Part 1: Introduction
- Part 2: Land Use Element
- Part 3: Housing Element
- Part 4: Open Space Element
- Part 5: Agricultural Resources Element
- Part 6: Resource Conservation Element
- Part 7: Public Safety Element
- Part 8: Circulation and Transit Element
- Part 9: Air Transportation Element
- Part 10: Public Facilities and Services Element
- Part 11: Noise Element



#### **4.0 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN PLAN PREPARATION AND FUTURE UPDATES**

The County encourages a high degree of public awareness of planning and development issues and participation by interested citizens in the preparation and consideration of plan policies. Preparation of this plan was assisted by two advisory committees appointed by the Board of Supervisors: an overall General Plan Advisory Committee responsible for reviewing and making suggestions on all elements of the plan, and an Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee with responsibility focused on several elements, especially the Agricultural Resources Element, which directly affects the county's agricultural industry. Local residents and property owners have been and will be encouraged to express their views about planning issues and policies proposed for incorporation into the general plan. Members of the advisory committees are identified on pages 12 and 13.

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**LAND USE ELEMENT**

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**SONOMA COUNTY IN THE BAY AREA REGION**

A detailed outline of the contents of the plan is provided at the end of this Introduction. Each element includes policies which are related to the physical development of the county to the year 2005.

In addition to the text, the various elements of the plan usually include one or more maps, including land use and open space maps for each of the nine planning areas shown in Figure IG-2 on page 5. The maps identify the land areas to which various policies apply.

### 3.2 THE PLAN ELEMENTS

**Land Use:** In addition to the nine general goals and policies, the Land Use Element describes where the different kinds of uses for land may be established in the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. Sections of this element express policies which are specific to each of the nine planning areas.

**Housing:** Future housing production needed to accommodate projected growth is evaluated, along with policies to: 1) encourage development of housing for low and moderate income households, 2) meet the special shelter needs of specific population groups, 3) maintain and improve the quality of housing, and 4) encourage production of diverse types of housing.

**Open Space:** This element designates various portions of the county in several open space classifications. The limitations on types and intensities of permissible uses and special development and permit review requirements are expressed in the text for each open space classification.

**Agricultural Resources:** Detailed guidelines and policies which apply to lands designated in the three agricultural land use categories are stated in this element. Policies address marketing of agricultural products, stabilization of agricultural use at the edge of urban areas, limitations on intrusion of residential uses, the location of agricultural services and visitor serving uses, provision of farmworker housing, and the streamlining of permit procedures for agricultural uses.

**Resource Conservation:** Policies are expressed for managed production and conservation of various resources, including: soils, water, forests and timber, vegetation and wildlife, fisheries and harbors, geothermal, mineral, and energy, atmospheric resources, and air quality.

**Public Safety:** Special limitations and procedures for review of development projects located in areas subject to natural hazards are included in this element. Safety hazards addressed include seismic and other geologic hazards, flooding, and susceptibility to wildland fires. Hazardous materials are also included in this element.

**Circulation and Transit:** The plans for the county's future highway and transit systems are expressed, with particular emphasis on the Highway 101 corridor and a parallel arterial system. The plan emphasizes an increased role for transit in serving commute trips and the importance of measures which will allocate existing highway capacity more efficiently during peak travel periods.

**Air Transportation:** This element expresses policies related to the public use airports in the county, including compatibility of land uses in adjacent areas. The plan focuses on the Sonoma County Airport and expresses policies related to the types and amounts of aviation activities to be accommodated and facilities needed to serve them.

**Public Facilities and Services:** The various public services which may affect the future development of land are emphasized, including water, sewer, parks, education, fire protection, and others.

**Noise:** This element evaluates existing and projected future noise conditions related to highways, airports, and other sources and expresses policies and standards to assure noise compatibility in future land development.

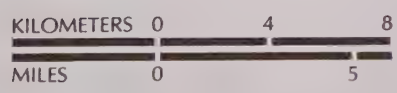


# THE NINE SUB-COUNTY PLANNING REGIONS OF SONOMA COUNTY

## INTRODUCTION AND GUIDE TO THE PLAN

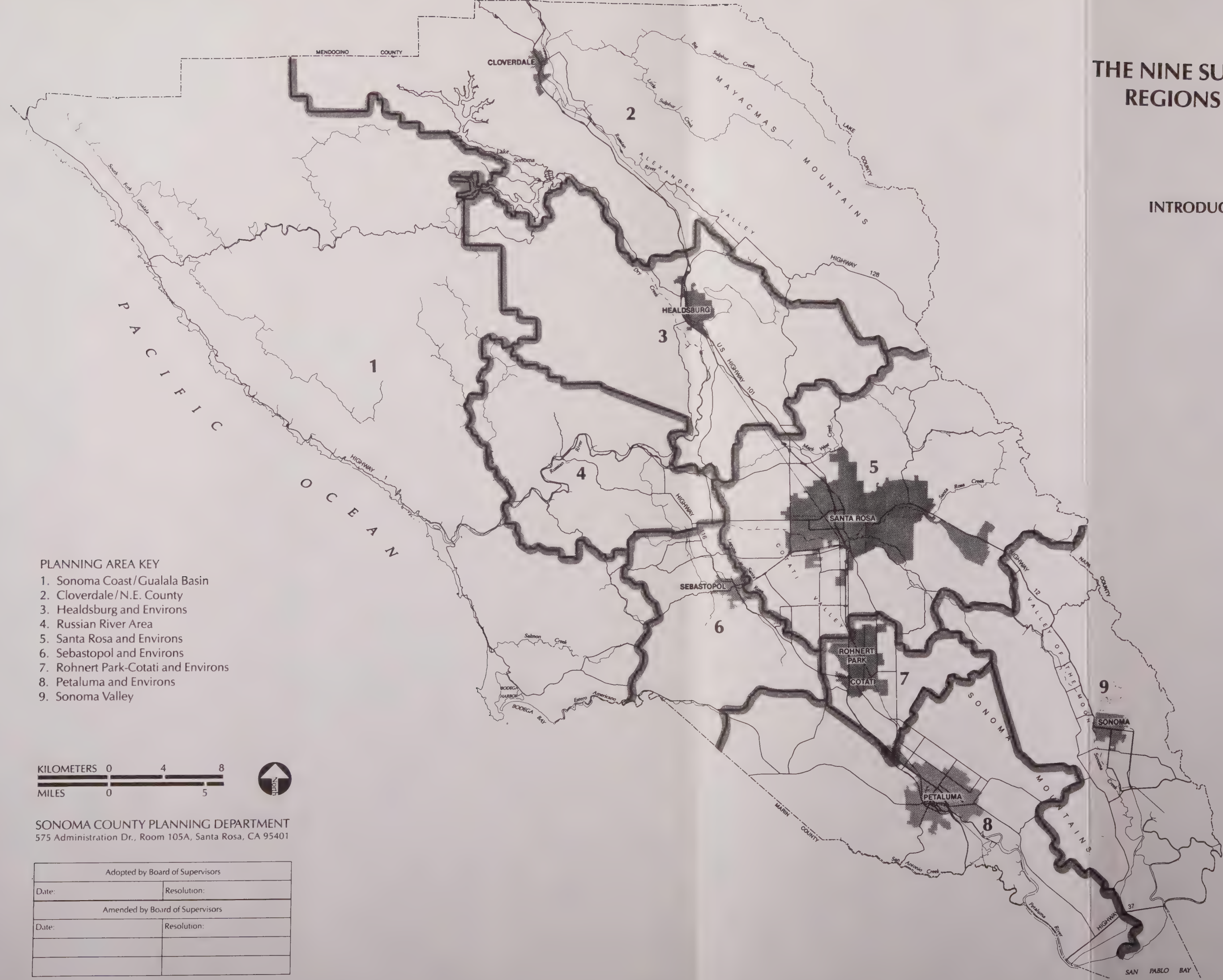
### PLANNING AREA KEY

- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
- 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
- 3. Healdsburg and Environs
- 4. Russian River Area
- 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
- 6. Sebastopol and Environs
- 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
- 8. Petaluma and Environs
- 9. Sonoma Valley



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Adopted by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:
Amended by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:

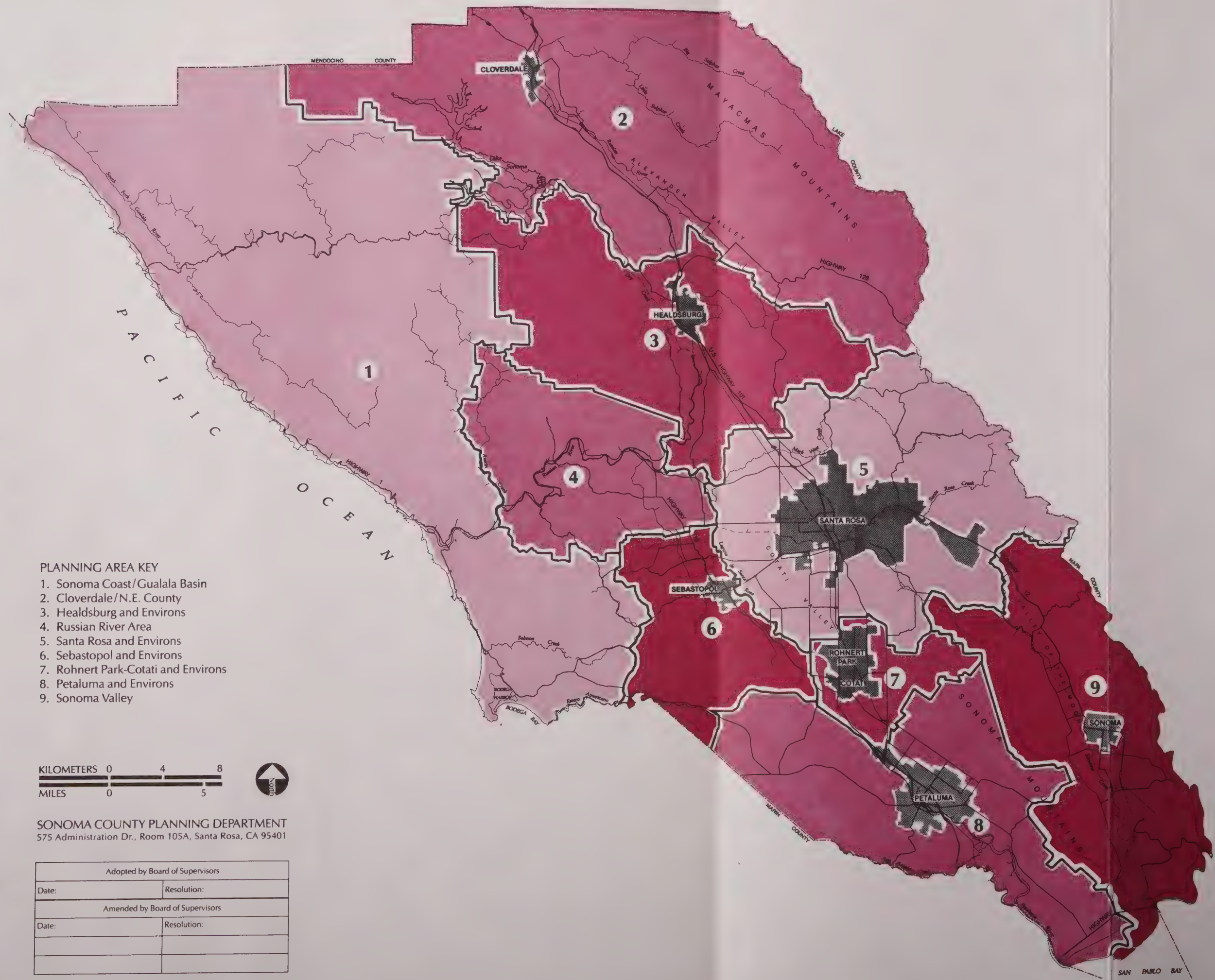






NINE SUB-COUNTY  
PLANNING REGIONS

LAND-USE ELEMENT



PLANNING AREA KEY

- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
- 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
- 3. Healdsburg and Environs
- 4. Russian River Area
- 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
- 6. Sebastopol and Environs
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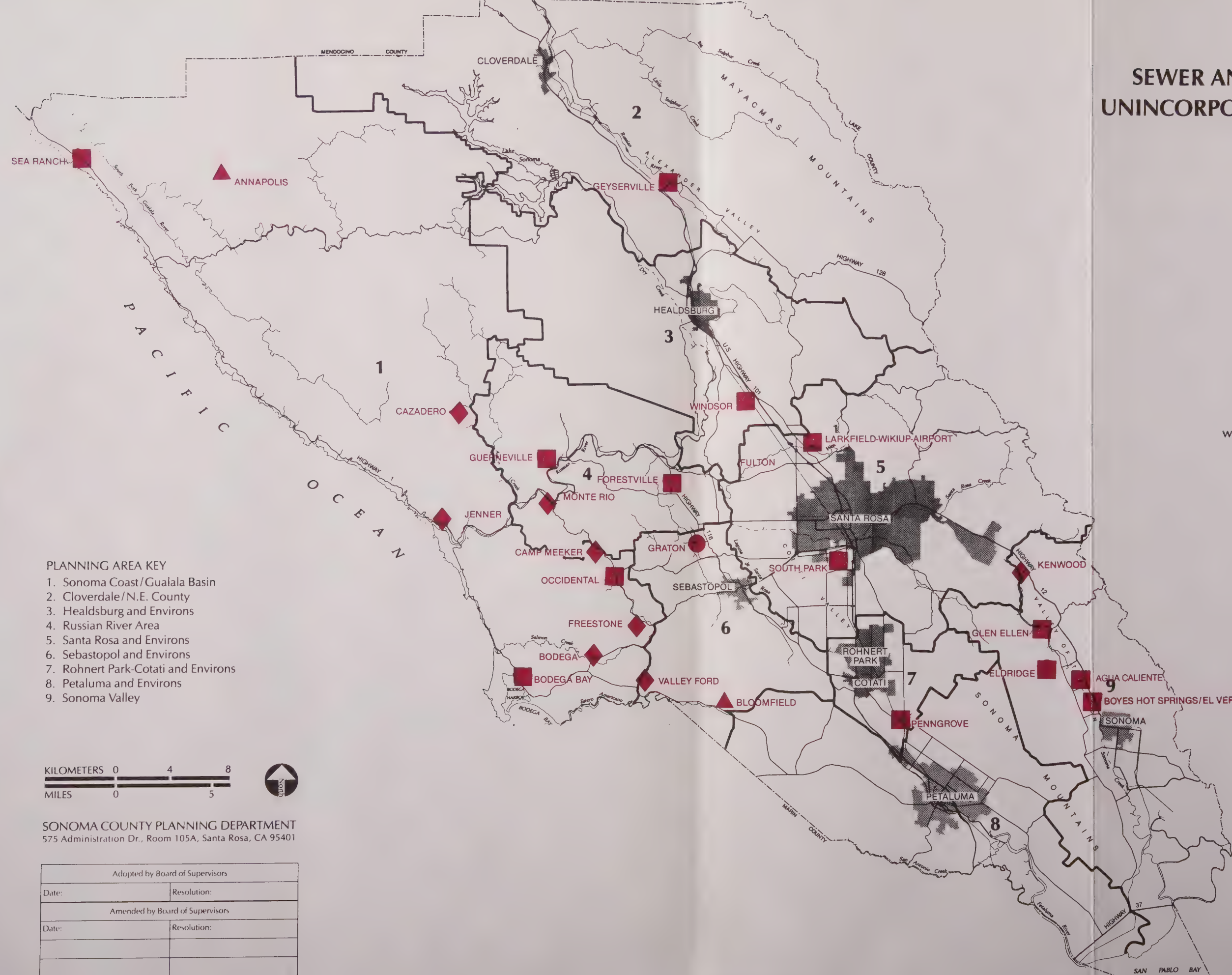
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Amended by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:





# SEWER AND WATER SERVICES IN UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES



### PLANNING AREA KEY

- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
- 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
- 3. Healdsburg and Environs
- 4. Russian River Area
- 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
- 6. Sebastopol and Environs
- 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
- 8. Petaluma and Environs
- 9. Sonoma Valley



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### LAND-USE ELEMENT

- Unincorporated Communities with sewer and water services
- Unincorporated Communities with sewer service only
- Unincorporated Communities with water distribution system only
- Unincorporated Communities with neither sewer nor water





# OPEN SPACE SEPARATOR AREAS BETWEEN CITIES AND/OR COMMUNITIES

## LAND USE ELEMENT

- Unincorporated Urban Communities
- Community Separator Areas

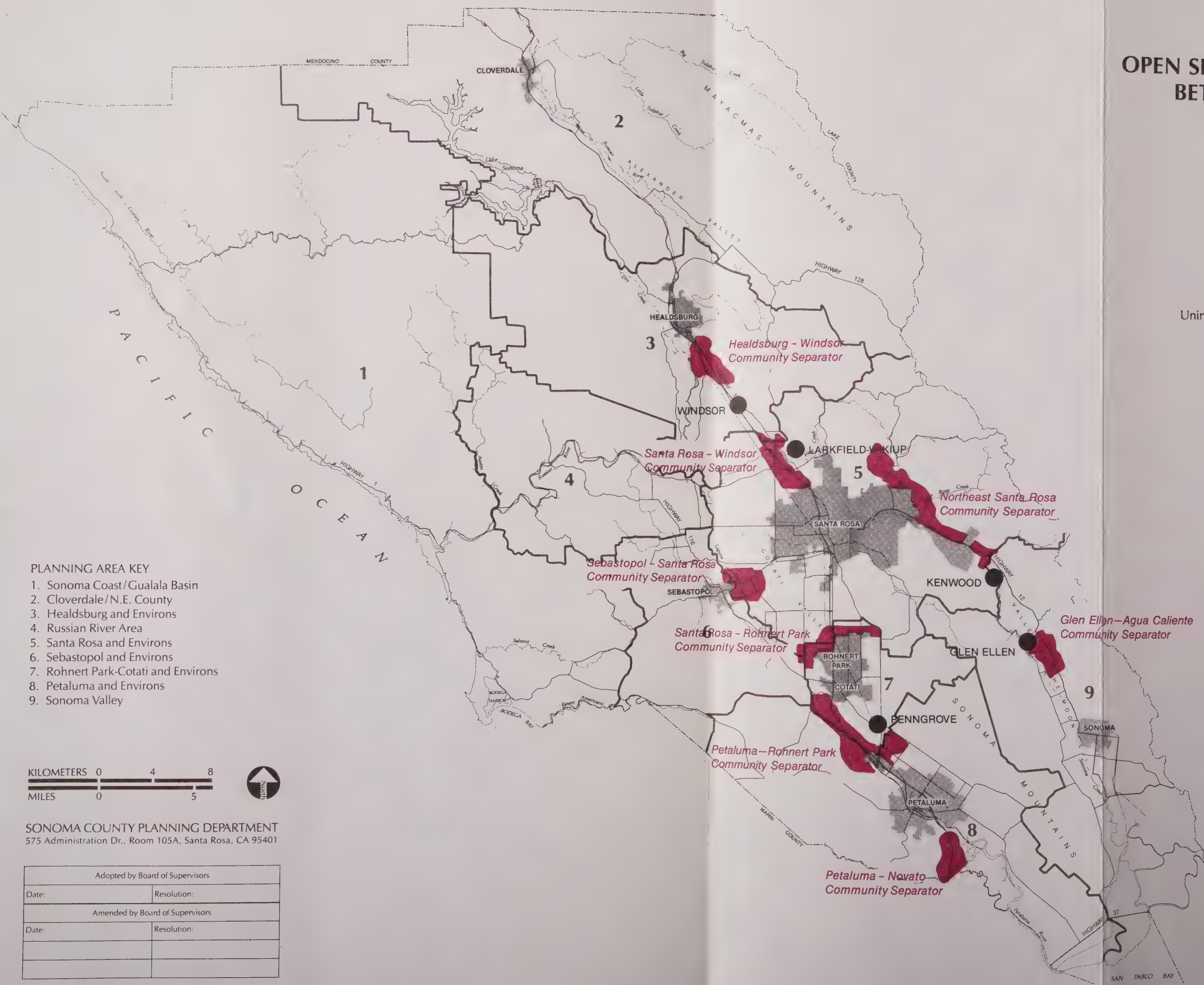
PLANNING AREA KEY

- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
- 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
- 3. Healdsburg and Environs
- 4. Russian River Area
- 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
- 6. Sebastopol and Environs
- 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
- 8. Petaluma and Environs
- 9. Sonoma Valley

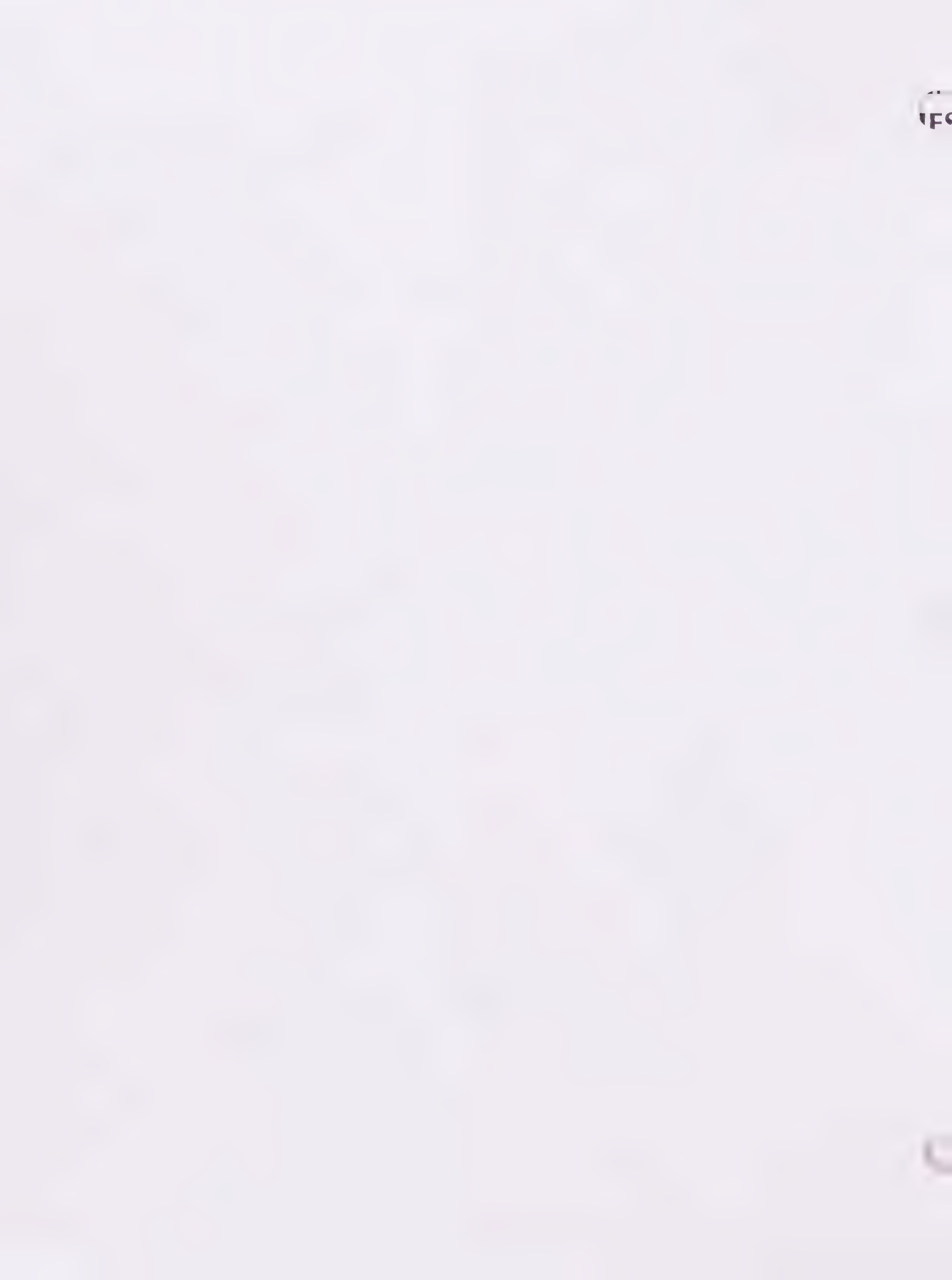


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Note: N/A - Not applicable; Figures LU-4a through LU-4i are not contained in the text of the General Plan, but are available separately.



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The Land Use Element provides the distribution, location and extent of uses of land for housing, business, industry, open space, agriculture, natural resources, recreation and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other uses. For each appropriate land use category, it includes standards for population density and building intensity.

The Land Use Element and its policies guide growth and the development and use of land through 2005. The County recognizes that the policies of this plan represent a legislative balance between the individual rights of property owners and the health, safety, and welfare needs of the community at large. Decisions made pursuant to this plan shall further community goals and objectives while not unconstitutionally abridging property rights.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Land Use Element balances the various goals and objectives of the other elements of the general plan. The elements are internally consistent because:

1. All elements use the same population, housing, and employment projections.
2. Policies in the Land Use Element support policies stated in the other elements.
3. The land use plan maps and the accompanying text represent a consciously selected balance among the various goals and objectives included in all of the elements. Site specific factors may result in less intensive use or lower density than allowed by the land use maps, but a policy in another element should not be used as the sole basis for denial of the use or density.
4. Where necessary, policies in other elements are cross-referenced

Other elements such as the Public Safety Element may contain state mandated parts of the Land Use Element. In such cases, the other element is considered to be part of this element.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

The Land Use Element has four major sections, the county wide land use policy framework, policies for each of nine planning areas, a land use plan map for each area, and an implementation program.

The county wide land use policy framework consists of nine general goals with related objectives and policies and descriptions of the land use categories which are applied to the land use maps. It should be noted here that the term "permitted uses" as used in the descriptions of the land use categories is intended to mean that such uses are consistent with the purpose of the category. The term does not imply that further discretionary entitlement may not be necessary prior to conduct of such uses.

The general goals, objectives, and policies apply throughout the County and are the basis for the more specific area policies, programs, and land use map designations. Future amendments to the Land Use Element should be reviewed based upon this policy framework and must conform to it.

Specific land use policies and a land use map are included for each of nine planning areas shown on Fig. LU-1 on page 21. The maps show applicable land use categories and maximum permitted density for each parcel. The maps show residential density as dwellings per acre in urban residential areas and acres per dwelling in rural areas.

The land use maps and text must be used together in order to fully understand the policies applicable to any particular situation. The land use maps have been prepared, to the extent possible, using the goals, objectives, and policies of the land use and other elements as well as those of previously adopted plans. Plan designations are based upon an evaluation of natural and cultural characteristics of the lands of Sonoma

County as well as the countywide land use policy framework and specific area policies. However, the analyses did not always include a detailed study of the circumstances and environmental constraints of each specific parcel. The County recognizes that future detailed evaluation of specific properties may show that an alternate use is warranted. For this reason, upon proper application, the County will consider amendments to this plan. Denial of a specific property owner request through the update process should not prejudice the right of such owner to apply for a future plan amendment based on more specific environmental or other pertinent information.

In some cases, unincorporated "islands" surrounded by or adjacent to cities are not shown on the land use plan maps. They are designated as "rural residential" with a maximum permitted density of one dwelling per five acres. If any other land areas are not shown or do not have an assigned use category, those land areas shall be "rural residential" with a maximum density of one dwelling per ten acres.

Future changes to the land use plan maps, whether to change the use category or permitted residential density, may be accomplished only through the general plan amendment process, provided that minor technical corrections involving the exercise of no discretion may be made in order to accurately reflect the intent of the Board of Supervisors in adopting the General Plan. These corrections may be accomplished by consent calendar vote of the Board without a general plan amendment as it is construed by Section 65358 of the Government Code.

Further, where parcels which are the subject of a lot line adjustment are located in different land use categories, or other general plan designations, the following guidelines should be applied:

- 1) if the adjustment significantly changes a general plan designation, require a concurrent filing of a general plan amendment.
- 2) if the adjustment is clearly minor in nature, it may be determined to be consistent with the general plan.

The final part of the land use element is the implementation program. It is intended to include specific measures to bring County land use regulations into conformance with the policies of this plan.

## **2.0 COUNTY WIDE LAND USE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 GENERAL GOALS AND POLICIES**

The County wide land use policy framework is the basis for the Land Use Element. The nine general goals relate to:

- growth projections and growth policy
- city and community centered growth
- compact city and community boundaries
- phasing of rural and urban growth with availability of adequate services
- open space separation between cities/communities
- opportunities for diverse rural and urban residential environments
- use of environmental suitability criteria to locate urban and rural growth
- protection of agricultural lands
- preservation of scenic features and biotic resource areas

#### **2.1.1 Growth Projections and Growth Policy**

Opinions differ whether or not the general plan should accommodate or attempt to restrict growth. This basic question affects the amount of projected growth in population and employment, its rate and timing, and its geographic distribution among the nine planning areas.

The main thrust of this debate is the extent of development which can occur without exceeding the carrying capacity of the natural environment, substantially lessening the quality of life for residents, or overloading public services such as roads, sewer and water supply, and criminal justice and public health facilities.



The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and California Department of Finance (DOF) project that the county's population will be about 475,000 by 2005. ABAG forecasts that employment will reach about 192,000 jobs by then. Projections by Sonoma County are slightly lower due to different assumptions about the effects of limited regional wastewater system capacity and transportation capacity in the Highway 101 corridor. This plan projects employment and population levels of 190,000 and 468,540, respectively, by 2005. Plan policies are geared toward ensuring that adequate public services and infrastructure are available to serve the projected population. Should growth substantially exceed plan projections, the implementation of plan policies to regulate the rate of growth will be necessary.

### **Population and Demographics**

The land use element is based upon the population projections in Table LU-1 on page 24. The county is expected to grow by about 7020 persons annually between 1990 and 2005 to an estimated 468,540 persons. These projections assume a declining growth rate after 1980.

Net immigration accounts for about 70 percent of the county's growth. In the eight cities, growth is the result of both immigration of new residents and annexations of existing households at the edges of the cities. Net population change in unincorporated areas includes losses due to these annexations as well as immigration of new residents. The eight cities would contain 68 percent of the county's population by 2005, compared with 56 percent in 1980. The emphasis upon urban growth is compatible with the growth and development policies of the eight cities.

The number of households is expected to increase to about 189,000 in 2005 (Table LU-2 on page 25). The number of households in unincorporated areas is expected to have a net increase of about 1,730 because the increase of 10,240 new units will be offset by annexation of about 8,510 existing units to the cities.

It should be noted that actual population for the unincorporated area may differ from the projections used in this plan at a given point in time. For instance, the January, 1988 estimated population in the unincorporated areas was 147,000, 11,500 higher than projected in this plan. About 24% of the difference is due to a slower rate of annexation by the cities. About 32% is likely due to an increased rate of new construction. The remaining 44% may be due to a number of factors, primarily conversion of seasonal dwellings to permanent use and increased average household size.

**Labor Force and Employment:** The resident labor force is projected to increase to about 241,000 as a result of both population growth and reduced unemployment rates (Table LU-3 on page 26). Women are expected to have a larger share of jobs than in the past.

The Land Use Element provides for additional job opportunities within Sonoma County to meet the needs of a larger population. Some residents, however, will continue to work elsewhere in the Bay Area. The economic base will likely continue to shift from resource production to "new technology" industries, retail trade and service jobs. Sonoma County has enough population and business activity to attract a secondary market sufficient to support retail and service industries typical of a regional center. Employment gains in retail trade and local services are projected to be the highest of any industry.

Notwithstanding the statistical trend towards "new technology" employment, the diversified agricultural industries in Sonoma County will continue to be a major factor in Sonoma County's economy. No new dairies are expected in the county, and some existing smaller dairies are anticipated to cease operation. However, herd sizes and production will likely increase. Employment is anticipated to remain constant. It is likely that an estimated additional 20,000 acres of grapes will be needed in addition to the present total of about 31,000 acres. Wineries may increase from about 150 to about 300. Vegetable and nursery crop production is increasing steadily. In both of those industries, employment will increase.



Table LU-1: POPULATION BY PLANNING AREA AND CITY, 1980 AND 2005

	1990			Projected 2005		
	City	Unincorp.	Total	City	Unincorp.	Total
PA 1: Sonoma Coast	----	6,500	6,500	----	8,500	8,500
PA 2: Cloverdale	5,300	5,200	10,500	8,200	5,600	13,800
PA 3: Healdsburg	9,500	16,700	26,200	14,800	30,700	45,500
PA 4: Russian River	----	14,120	14,120	----	15,800	15,800
PA 5: Santa Rosa	117,000	34,200	151,200	165,000	25,000	190,000
PA 6: Sebastopol	7,000	18,160	25,160	10,100	18,300	28,400
PA 7: Rohnert Pk./Cotati	36,100	6,000	42,100	48,900	6,600	55,500
PA 8: Petaluma	43,800	10,730	54,530	58,700	10,800	69,500
PA 9: Sonoma Valley	<u>8,350</u>	<u>24,540</u>	<u>32,890</u>	<u>11,800</u>	<u>29,740</u>	<u>41,540</u>
County Total	227,050	136,150	363,200	317,500	151,040	468,540

Sources: Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986 and 1990 population projections.

TABLE LU-2: SUMMARY OF SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC DATA, CITIES AND UNINCORPORATED AREA, 1990 AND 2005

	<u>1990</u>	<u>Projected 2005</u>
<u>County Totals</u>		
Population	363,200	468,540
Average Household Size	2.40	2.44
Housing Units:		
Total	158,310	199,790
Year-round	151,450	192,120
<u>Total, All Cities</u>		
Population	227,050	317,500
Average Household Size	2.45	2.41
Housing Units:		
Total	94,370	133,320
Year-round	93,400	132,340
<u>Total, Unincorporated Area</u>		
Population	136,150	151,040
Average Household Size	2.32	2.50
Housing Units:		
Total	63,940	66,480
Year-round	58,050	59,770

---

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986 and 1990 Population and Housing Projections.

TABLE LU-3: LABOR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUTING, 1990 AND 2005

	<u>1990</u>	<u>Projected 2005</u>
<u>Population by</u>		
<u>Age Group</u>		
0 - 4	26,120	28,130
5 - 19	72,160	87,940
20 - 44	148,770	159,180
45 - 64	66,180	132,830
65 +	49,970	60,460
<u>Labor Force (LF):</u>		
<u>Male</u>		
LF Eligible Population	133,610	177,670
LF Participation Rate (%)	72.5	71.7
Labor Force	96,870	127,390
<u>Female</u>		
LF Eligible Population	149,180	198,790
LF Participation Rate (%)	54.5	57.1
Labor Force	81,310	113,510
<u>Total</u>		
LF Eligible Population	282,790	376,460
LF Participation Rate	63.0	64.0
Labor Force	178,180	240,900
<u>Employment in County</u>		
Basic	51,040	67,900
Population-Serving	89,380	121,820
Total	140,420	189,720
<u>Commuters</u>		
In-commuters	4,900	5,400
Out-commuters	31,080	42,090
<u>Employed Residents</u>	166,600	226,410
<u>Unemployment</u>		
Unemployed Persons	11,580	14,450
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.5	6.0

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and  
Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986 and 1990



TABLE LU-4: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY: 1980, 1990, 2000 AND 2005

Industry	Estimated(1)		Projected		Projected Change	
	1980	1990	2000	2005	1980-1990	1980-2005
<u>Basic Industries</u>						
Agriculture	5,840	5,330	5,000	5,540	- 510	- 300
Mining	480	510	560	610	30	130
New Technology (2)	4,410	10,080	15,890	17,520	5,670	13,110
Centralized						
Manufacturing (3)	1,510	2,050	2,750	3,050	540	1,540
Decentralized						
Manufacturing (4)	6,110	7,230	7,940	8,720	1,120	2,610
Other Manuf. (5)	2,540	3,020	3,330	3,680	480	1,140
Transportation	1,430	1,850	2,160	2,370	420	940
Trade	3,770	4,760	5,330	5,860	990	2,090
Finance/Insurance	1,980	2,400	2,610	2,870	420	890
Services	7,110	8,700	10,030	11,080	1,590	3,970
Fed/State Govt.	4,530	5,110	5,790	6,600	580	2,070
Subtotal	39,710	51,040	61,390	67,900	11,330	28,190
<u>Population Serving Industries</u>						
Construction	7,530	9,830	11,880	13,080	2,300	5,550
Trans/Utilities	3,700	4,390	4,900	5,400	690	1,700
Retail Trade	22,110	29,530	36,360	40,140	7,420	18,030
Banking/Real Estate	4,310	5,900	7,530	8,320	1,590	4,010
Services	17,530	23,150	28,820	31,800	5,620	14,270
Local Government	13,280	16,580	21,020	23,080	3,300	9,800
Subtotal	68,470	89,380	110,510	121,820	20,920	53,360
Total	108,168	140,420	171,900	189,720	32,250	81,550

## Notes:

1. Estimated from 1980 U.S. Bureau of the Census data, California Employment Development Department data, and Angus McDonald and Associates, et al, 1984, "Sonoma County General Plan Update Employment Trends Analysis and Revised Projections."
2. Includes: Manufacturing of ordinance and accessories, electrical equipment and supplies, and instruments and related products.
3. Includes: Textile mill products, apparel and other textile products, printing and publishing, rubber and plastic products, leather and leather goods.
4. Includes: Food and kindred products, lumber and wood products, furniture and fixtures, paper and allied products, clay, sand, and glass products, and miscellaneous manufacturing.
5. Fabricated metal products, machinery (except electrical), transportation equipment, chemicals and allied products, petroleum and coal products, and primary metal products.

According to the Economic Development Board staff, the gross value of Sonoma County's agricultural products is multiplied 2.5 to 5 times in the county's economy. Based on over \$200 million of raw products produced in 1987, Sonoma County now has a billion dollar agricultural economy. The trend toward added value in all agricultural industries in the county suggests both an expanding dollar base and increasing employment in the county's agricultural industries, although statistically many of these jobs will not be allocated to this sector of the economy.

In 1980, about 25,000 people commuted from homes in Sonoma County to jobs in other counties. Even with the projected job growth within the county, the number of out-commuters is likely to increase. However, the proportion of out-commuters is expected to drop from 19.5 percent (1980) to 18.6 percent (2005). The balance between population growth and employment is also likely to change. In 1980 there were .36 jobs per person. The projected ratio is .41 in 2005.

**GOAL LU-1:** Accommodate Sonoma County's fair share of future growth in the San Francisco Bay Area region as determined by the County and shown on Tables LU-2 and LU-3 in a manner consistent with environmental constraints, maintenance of the high quality of life enjoyed by existing residents, and the capacities of public facilities and services. Achieve a better balance between job opportunities and population growth.

**Objective LU-1.1:** Correlate development authorized by the land use plan maps (Figures LU-4a through LU-4i) with projected population and employment growth as shown on Tables LU-2 and LU-3. Provide an adequate but not excessive supply of residential, commercial and industrial lands to accommodate an additional 10,240 residential units in the unincorporated portions of the County over the 1990 baseline. 8,510 units are projected to be annexed during the 1990-2005 period.

**Objective LU-1.2:** Encourage the major share of commercial and industrial growth in the cities but permit a limited amount of this growth in unincorporated communities with urban services.

**Objective LU-1.3:** Designate lands within the various land use categories to make available residential and employment opportunities and to achieve a balance between job opportunities and population growth countywide, subject to any constraints of environmental suitability, protection of agriculture and other resource protection, and availability of public services.

**In order to accomplish these objectives, the County shall use the land use maps and the following policies:**

**LU-1a:** This plan has relied extensively upon policies and designations set forth in previous specific plans. The County shall continue to use "specific plans", "area plans", and "local area development guidelines" to implement this plan. The following existing plans shall be amended as may be necessary to comply with state law requirements for specific plans and to be consistent with the general plan. After review of development standards found in the following specific plans (1,2,3), those standards which further the purpose, goals and objectives of this plan may be found to be consistent with the general plan:

- 1) Windsor Specific Plan
- 2) Airport Industrial Specific Plan
- 3) Aggregate Resources Specific Plan

The following plans shall be amended as necessary to be consistent with the General plan and shall be termed "area plans":

- 1) South Santa Rosa Plan
- 2) Bennett Valley Plan
- 3) Larkfield-Wikiup Plan
- 4) Sonoma Mountain Plan
- 5) West Petaluma Plan
- 6) Petaluma Dairy Belt Plan
- 7) Penngrove Plan
- 8) Franz Valley Plan



The following plans shall be repealed, but development guidelines contained therein shall be reviewed and updated and considered for adoption as "local area development guidelines", provided that they are consistent with the general plan. Until such a time that these guidelines are adopted, any policies contained in these plans shall continue to apply provided they are consistent with the general plan:

- 1) North Santa Rosa Plan
- 2) West Santa Rosa Plan
- 3) North Sonoma Valley Plan
- 4) South Sonoma Areas I and II
- 5) Lower River Plan
- 6) Hessel Plan
- 7) Russian River Plan
- 8) West Sebastopol Plan

The following plans shall be repealed:

- 1) Geyserville Plan
- 2) South Sonoma Areas III and IV
- 3) Barnett Valley Plan
- 4) Forestville Plan
- 5) Green Valley Plan
- 6) Harrison Grade Plan
- 7) Commercial Industrial Study

After the adoption of this plan, the County shall request an amendment of the Local Coastal Plan through the Coastal Commission to bring the Local Coastal Plan into conformance with the general plan.

Where differences are found between the general plan and an applicable specific plan or area plan, the general plan shall supercede.

**LU-1b:** The County may prepare specific plans and/or area plans in additional areas of the County, primarily in areas with concentrations of commercial or industrial uses and in areas within urban service boundaries. These plans may include measures which phase planned growth with public services.

**LU-1c:** Review and update population and economic growth projections. Review the general plan as necessary when ABAG or other appropriate agencies complete their determinations of regional housing needs. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to limit the power of the County to make an independent assessment of its fair share of regional growth.

**LU-1d:** Establish a growth monitoring system which measures the amount of building activity within the major use categories for each of the nine planning areas and for lands within the boundaries of each urban service area. Submit summary reports annually to the Board of Supervisors. Include in the monitoring system periodic assessments whether or not public services and infrastructure have kept pace with development.

**LU-1e:** If necessary, use zoning to regulate the timing of development to assure a better balance between jobs and population. Zoning may authorize a lower development potential than that allowed by the land use maps.

**LU-1f:** Amend the non-conforming use provisions of the zoning ordinance to allow for additional maintenance, restoration, reconstruction, and minor expansion of legal non-conforming uses.

**LU-1g:** Evaluate land use plan amendments subject to a) constraints of environmental suitability, b) protection of agriculture, c) availability of public services, d) the County projected population and employment levels, and e) other plan goals, objectives, and policies.



**LU-1h:** Notwithstanding the land use designations of this plan, development applications accepted as complete for filing prior to December 9, 1988 may be considered consistent with the land use map and other goals, objectives and policies of this plan if such application is determined to be consistent with the general plan in effect as of the date of filing. The purpose of this policy is to provide for the orderly transition and equitable treatment of development applications submitted in accordance with the 1978 General Plan.

**LU-1i:** In the event that the monitoring programs show inadequate public services for planned growth or that planned growth is significantly exceeding projections, consider moratoria on development entitlements, permit allocations or other growth management measures.

### **2.1.2 City and Community Centered Growth**

Generally, concentrated growth allows greater efficiency and economy in providing public services, conserves agriculture and resource lands, and preserves the rural character desired by many of the county's residents. However, it may add to traffic congestion in some areas and may limit rural living opportunities.

In 1980, about 56 percent of the County's population (166,452) lived in the eight cities. Ten percent lived in the unincorporated communities shown in Figure LU-2 on page 31. The cities' population is predicted to increase to 317,500 in 2005, or 68 percent of the county total.

The capability of the unincorporated communities to provide water and sewer services varies. Of the 26 existing communities, fourteen (14) have both sewer and water systems. Eight (8) have water but rely on individual septic systems. One (1) has sewer only. Three (3) have neither water nor sewer systems. Some systems do not have unused capacity. The land use element has identified cities and selected unincorporated communities for future growth based in part upon available sewer and water capacities as well as the availability of other public infrastructure.

**GOAL LU-2:** Accommodate the major share of future growth within the eight existing cities and their expansion areas and within selected unincorporated communities which are planned to have adequate water and sewer capacities.

**Objective LU-2.1:** Accommodate a population increase of about 14,890 residents over the 1990 baseline in the unincorporated communities.

**Objective LU-2.2:** Allocate the largest amounts of growth to the Windsor and Larkfield-Wikiup communities. Allocate modest amounts of growth based upon the limits of their public services to Bodega Bay, Guerneville, South Santa Rosa, Penngrove, Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, Geyserville, Occidental, Bodega, Cazadero, Freestone, Jenner, Forestville, Graton, Kenwood, Glen Ellen, Eldridge, Monte Rio, Valley Ford, and Bloomfield.

**Objective LU-2.3:** Limit the amount of population growth and development in rural portions of the county outside of the cities and the unincorporated communities identified above.

**Objective LU-2.4:** Coordinate with cities to maximize cooperative planning and implementation of the general plan.

The following policies, in addition to those in the Public Facilities and Services Element, shall be used to accomplish the above objectives:

**LU-2a:** Maintain a residential holding capacity that is as close as possible to projected growth. Consider denial of land use map amendments which add residential density in rural areas if residential holding capacity exceeds projected growth, recognizing that future development may not always use 100% of the capacity of all parcels.

**LU-2b:** Evaluate all city or city/county projects which affect the unincorporated area for consistency with the County general plan. Inform the Board of any project which may be inconsistent with the general plan. Work with the applicable city to resolve any inconsistencies in a manner which is consistent with the county general plan.

### 2.1.3 Compact City and Community Boundaries

Sprawling development generally results in more costly public services. Compact city and community boundaries provide a more efficient development pattern and lower these costs. However, while higher densities may reduce the amount of land needed for development, residents may feel that they adversely affect the quality of life in existing neighborhoods. The density of development at the urban fringe is also a concern. Therefore, two approaches can be used. One, "feathering", gradually reduces density as a transition between urban and rural areas. Another approach, "holding zones", maintains low density next to the urban boundary to reserve land for more efficient future development.

**GOAL LU-3:** Locate future growth within the cities and unincorporated urban service areas in a compact manner using vacant "infill" parcels and lands next to existing development at the edge of these areas.

**Objective LU-3.1:** Identify expansion area boundaries for the eight cities and for urban service areas in unincorporated communities so that the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) may consider them when adopting or amending spheres-of-influence or other urban service boundaries.

**Objective LU-3.2:** Provide enough land for the expansion of cities and unincorporated urban service areas to accommodate, but not substantially exceed, the projected urban residential growth. Lands planned for urban development in each planning area are shown on the land use plan maps.

**Objective LU-3.3:** Encourage "infill" development within the expansion areas of the cities and unincorporated communities.

**Objective LU-3.4:** Reserve those lands just outside urban expansion or urban service boundaries which may be needed for urban development after 2005.

The following policies, in addition to those of the Public Facilities and Services Element, shall be used to accomplish the above objectives:

**LU-3a:** submit a report to LAFCO on general plan conformity when it is considering a proposal to adopt or amend a sphere-of-influence or other urban service boundary for a city or for a special district with its own elected Board of Directors.

**LU-3b:** In urban service areas, maintain a residential holding capacity that is as close as possible to projected growth. Consider denial of land use map amendments which add residential density if residential holding capacity exceeds projected growth, recognizing that future development may not use 100% of the capacity of all parcels.

**LU-3c:** Avoid extension of sewer or water services outside of a sphere of influence or urban service area. Consider exceptions to this policy only:

- 1) where necessary to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development, or
- 2) where a substantial overriding public benefit, as authorized by policy OS-1c or OS-2c on pages 178 and 181 would result, unless the LAFCO has adopted a "no annexation" policy.
- 3) Water service only may be extended for a property which is located within a water district boundary in existence as of March, 1989.

**LU-3d:** Maintain a 10 acre or lower density in areas just outside urban service boundaries. Where the land use map indicates a higher density in such an area, avoid further density increases.



#### **2.1.4 Phasing of Rural and Urban Growth with Availability of Adequate Public Services**

If public services and facilities do not keep pace with development, the quality of service may deteriorate, adversely affecting the quality of life of existing residents. These services include roadways, law enforcement, fire protection, water, sewer, parks, mental and physical health facilities, etc.

In recent years, service expansion costs have been paid primarily by new, rather than existing, development. However, a requirement that all services be in place prior to approval of new development might unduly slow new construction. Since adequate public services are essential to existing and new residents, this element establishes policies which correlate growth and services and which phase development with provision of services.

The land use maps and text designate a number of locations where zoning will be more restrictive (allow less development) than the land use designation. Typically, this circumstance occurs within expansion areas of cities or where urban services will not be available until annexation by the applicable city. In these cases, zoning is used to limit development pending annexation.

Similarly, use of this technique might be applicable to lands under Williamson Act Contracts, lands which are subject to service constraints such as sewer or water moratoria, or traffic congestion, and lands subject to policies which exclude ancillary uses such as mobile homes, or second units.

**GOAL LU-4.1:** Maintain adequate public services in both rural and urban service areas to accommodate projected growth. Authorize additional development only when it is clear that a funding plan or mechanism is in place to provide needed services in a timely manner.

**Objective LU-4.1** Assure that development occurs only where physical public services and infrastructure, including school and park facilities, public safety, access and response times, water and wastewater management systems, drainage, and roads, are planned to be available in time to serve the projected development.

**Objective LU-4.2** Evaluate the need for and cost of providing social, criminal justice, mental and physical health and other similar services.

**Objective LU-4.3:** Reduce congestion on the countywide highway system by maintaining a "C" level of service or better on all designated arterial and collector roadways unless a lower level of service is shown on Figures CT-2c and CT-2d on pages 291 - 293 of the Circulation and Transit Element, a lower level of service is determined to be acceptable due to environmental or community values existing in some portions of the County, or the project(s) which would cause the lower level of service has an overriding public benefit which outweighs the increased congestion which would result.

**Objective LU-4.4:** Correlate new development with roadway improvements necessary to maintain the countywide levels of service set forth in Objective LU-4.3 or better on arterial and collector roadways.

The following policies, in addition to those included in the Public Facilities and Services and Circulation and Transit Elements, shall be used to accomplish the above objectives.

**LU-4a:** If necessary, use zoning to assure that development shall occur only if public services are adequate or improvements are made to maintain an acceptable level of service. One such method could involve the use of "dual zoning" which would specify zoning with services and zoning without services.

**LU-4b:** Use the levels of service shown on Figures CT-2c and CT-2d on pages 291 - 293 of the Circulation and Transit Element to determine whether or not congestion is exceeding the desired level of service on the countywide highway system. Use area and/or project traffic analyses to determine whether intersection impacts or other localized congestion may also affect these desired levels of service.



**LU-4c:** Assure that new development occurs only when a funding mechanism is available for improvements needed to achieve these levels of service. If the Board determines that a project will provide significant overriding public benefit, the project may be exempt from this requirement.

**LU-4d:** Assure that County-provided physical services and infrastructure will accommodate the projected amount of growth authorized by the land use plan. Prepare facility master plans based upon the holding capacity of the land use plan plus generally accepted engineering contingency factors. Periodically but no less than every 5 years assess the status of public services in relation to growth. Encourage public facilities planning and design beyond the 2005 horizon if the additional capacity does not induce increased pressure for population or employment growth in excess of that projected in the land use plan. Facility plans shall clearly delineate the portion of capacity allocated to growth after 2005. Work with the cities to assure that such services are adequate for existing and future residents. Use proposed annexations, redevelopment agreements, revenue sharing agreements, and the CEQA process as tools to ensure that incorporated development pay its fair share toward provision of these services.

**LU-4e:** Prepare a social and administrative services master plan which sets forth the projected countywide needs for these services and costs therefore. Work with the cities to assure that such services are adequate for existing and future residents. Use proposed annexations, redevelopment agreements, revenue sharing agreements, and the CEQA process as tools to ensure that incorporated development pay its fair share toward provision of these services.

**LU-4f:** Assure that new development contribute its fair share toward provision of the public services and infrastructure needed for projected growth.

### **2.1.5 Open Space Separation Between Cities/Communities**

Community identity is an important aspect of the quality of life for many of the county's residents. Large, continuous areas of urban development where one city or community merges with another without visual relief may detract from this identity. On the other hand, property owners often consider areas between cities and communities to be prime land for development. The Land Use Element establishes policies consistent with the Open Space Element to reserve important open space lands between cities and communities.

**GOAL LU-5:** Identify important open space areas between the county's cities and communities. Maintain them in a largely open or natural character with low intensities of development.

**Objective LU-5.1** Retain low intensities of use in open space "separators" between cities and communities along the Highway 101 corridor and within the central Sonoma County area as shown on Figure LU-3 on page 37.

**Objective LU-5.2** Encourage formation of programs to preserve the visual and scenic character of community separators.

The following policies, in addition to those in the Open Space Element, shall be used to accomplish the above objectives.

**LU-5a:** The County shall neither approve extension of urban services into any community separator nor approve connection of any lot in a community separator to existing urban services except as allowed by policy LU-3c on page 33.

**LU-5b:** Revise specific or area plans to include community separator lands and implementing measures as necessary.

**LU-5c:** Avoid commercial and industrial land uses in community separators other than those allowed in the agricultural and resource categories or except as may be authorized by Policy OS-1c on page 178.

Consider amendments for outdoor recreational or other uses with a low intensity of structures only in those community separators along the Highway 101 corridor.

**LU-5d:** Avoid amendments to increase residential density in community separators, since these densities were established based upon the policies set forth in other elements of this plan as well as the open space, separation, and visual considerations identified in this section. The integrity of community separators cannot be maintained at densities in excess of one unit per ten acres. However, under no circumstances shall this policy be used to justify an increase in density from that designated on the land use map.

**LU-5e:** Notwithstanding the density shown on the land use map, a two-lot subdivision of land is deemed consistent with the land use plan if the sole purpose of the subdivision is to create a parcel for preservation of rare and endangered species habitat or other biotic resources. Such subdivision shall not be deemed consistent with the land use plan unless the property owner agrees in writing that development on the subject parcel is limited to that necessary for and consistent with management of the preserve.

### **2.1.6 Opportunities for Diverse Rural and Urban Residential Environments**

Sonoma County has a wide range of residential opportunities, from small urban to large rural lots. In rural areas, large lots may reduce the supply of land and increase conflicts with farming and other resource uses. Many believe that extensive areas of rural homesites should be made available in order to meet the demands of people leaving urbanized areas for homes in the country.

However, existing residents in rural communities and agricultural operations often oppose new development of this kind. In urban areas, those who desire opportunities for housing of different types and densities face opposition from existing residents who want to retain the existing neighborhood character.

**GOAL LU-6: Diversify new residential development types and densities. Include a range of urban densities and housing types in the cities and in some unincorporated communities, and lower density in rural communities. In rural areas, housing types and densities should meet the needs of agricultural and resource users and provide limited residential development on large parcels.**

**Objective LU-6.1** Provide opportunities for a range of urban housing types and densities in Windsor, Larkfield-Wikiup, South Park, Bodega Bay, Guerneville, Forestville, and Boyes Hot Springs/El Verano/ Agua Caliente.

**Objective LU-6.2** Retain a rural village character in other unincorporated communities but provide a range of housing types and densities.

**Objective LU-6.3** Limit residential density to a maximum of one dwelling per acre in unincorporated communities with public water but without sewer systems.

**Objective LU-6.4** Limit new rural residential development primarily to "infill" in those areas that already have concentrations of these uses.

**Objective LU-6.5** Avoid further subdivision of rural lands which at the time of previous subdivision were given restrictive zoning on the remaining rural parcel.

**Objective LU-6.6:** Create two Rural Residential zoning districts which provide different levels of permitted crop and animal production in the Rural Residential land use category.

**Objective LU-6.7:** Encourage the development of adequate housing for farmworkers and farm family members.

**Objective LU-6.8:** Provide opportunities for public and private schools and churches to locate in rural areas.



The following policies, in addition to those of the Agricultural Resources Element, shall be used to accomplish the above objectives:

**LU-6a:** General plan amendments which add rural residential development shall not be considered unless at a minimum the proposed new rural residential development: 1) would not result in deficiencies in private or public service capacities, 2) is not located in an agricultural production area and would not adversely affect existing or potential farming operations, 3) is on lands with adequate groundwater and septic waste disposal, and 4) would not adversely affect important natural features or resources.

**LU-6b:** Site specific environmental factors shall be considered in making decisions on development permits. Site specific factors which create health or safety problems or result in unmitigated significant environmental impacts may at times reduce densities which are allowed by the land use map and zoning.

**LU-6c:** Past subdivisions using a clustered design have exhausted general plan density, but left a remaining lot large enough to allow further division under the land use map. In these cases, restrictive zoning was used and shall continue to be used to show that there is no subdivision potential for the remaining lot. Unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the most recent general plan update intended to allow an increase in development potential, nothing set forth in this plan shall be construed to mean that development potential now exists for these lots.

**LU-6d:** Provide for different levels of crop and animal production in the Rural Residential land use category by creating an "Agriculture and Residential" and a "Rural Residential" zoning district, one which permits unlimited animal and crop production on parcels two or more acres in size, and one which limits agricultural activities regardless of parcel size. In neither zoning district will the agricultural activities be considered the primary use of the land; nor will all of the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element apply.

**LU-6e:** Public schools in rural land use categories shall meet all of the following minimum criteria:

- (1) a requirement that the school district must obtain a use permit for any proposed facility, even though by State law the district is exempt from zoning regulations.
- (2) if in an agricultural category, the use shall not be located on lands currently used for agricultural production and shall not result in conflicts with agricultural production or related processing, support services, or visitor serving uses. If in a residential category, the use shall be compatible with residential category uses in the area.
- (3) conflicts with other resource production activities are avoided.
- (4) adequate public services and infrastructure must be available for the use, without inducing growth in an area where it is not projected or planned.
- (5) the district shall demonstrate that a need exists for the proposed facility based upon projected growth in the district and that no economically feasible alternative location for the school facility is available in an urban land use category.
- (6) the site has frontage on a designated collector or arterial roadway.

**LU-6f:** Private nursery, primary or secondary schools and churches in rural land use categories shall meet all of the following minimum criteria:

- (1) the school or church must obtain a use permit prior to initiation of the use.
- (2) the use shall not be located on lands currently used for agricultural production and shall not result in conflicts with agricultural production or related processing, support services, or visitor serving uses.
- (3) conflicts with other resource production activities are avoided.
- (4) adequate public services and infrastructure must be available for the use, without inducing unplanned growth.
- (5) sites are limited to existing parcels less than 5 acres unless an agricultural, scenic, or other in perpetuity easement is applied to the portion of the site not part of the proposed use.
- (6) the site has frontage on a designated collector or arterial roadway.
- (7) the use primarily serves a congregation or student body which resides in the community in which the proposed use is to be located.



**LU-6g:** Designate housing opportunity areas during the review and update of the Housing Element and specific area plans.

### **2.1.7 Use of Environmental Suitability Criteria in Locating and Guiding Rural and Urban Growth**

Development in parts of Sonoma County could result in exposure of people and property to environmental risks or hazards. Flooding, fire and seismic hazards, landslides, erosion and scarcity of ground water are examples.

Some land is especially sensitive to intense development. Many of these same characteristics, however, often make land attractive as a rural homesite. As a result, opinions differ as to the extent of development which should be allowed in these areas.

**GOAL LU-7:** Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to environmental risks and hazards. Limit development on lands that are especially vulnerable or sensitive to environmental damage.

**Objective LU-7.1** Restrict development in areas which are constrained by the natural limitations of the land, including but not limited to, flood, fire, geologic hazards, groundwater availability and septic suitability.

The following policies, in addition to those in the Open Space, Resource Conservation, and Public Safety Elements, shall be used to accomplish the above objective

**LU-7a:** Avoid general plan amendments which would allow additional development in floodplains, unless such development is of low intensity and does not include large permanent structures.

**LU-7b:** Limit development in wetlands designated on Figure OS-3 on page 185.

**LU-7c:** Prohibit new permanent structures within the floodway. Require that any development that may be permitted within the floodplain to be raised above the 100-year flood elevation.

**LU-7d:** Avoid commercial, industrial, and residential land use designations in areas subject to "high" or "very high" fire hazards, as identified in the Public Safety Element, unless the combination of fuel load, access, water supply, and other project design measures will reduce the potential fire-related impacts of new development to insignificant levels.

### **2.1.8 Protection of Agricultural Lands**

Agriculture is a major part of Sonoma County's economy. Many types of agriculture exist, including vineyards, orchards, dairies, forage crops, specialty crops, and livestock. Farms are both full time and part time operations. Agricultural production in some areas is threatened both by pressures of urban development and by creation of small residential lots in the midst of agricultural lands. Continued farming is also affected by changes in commodity prices. The resulting economic pressure on the farmer can lead to requests for land divisions. Land use policy in agricultural areas must consider 1) the extent to which more small residential lots should be allowed 2) the need for agricultural support services in rural areas, and 3) the extent of visitor serving uses which may be compatible with farming.

**GOAL LU-8:** Protect lands currently in agricultural production and lands with soils and other characteristics which make them potentially suitable for agricultural use. Retain large parcel sizes and avoid incompatible non-agricultural uses.

**Objective LU-8.1:** Avoid conversion of lands currently used for agricultural production to non-agricultural use.

**Objective LU-8.2:** Retain large parcels in agricultural production areas and avoid new parcels less than 20 acres in the "Land Intensive Agriculture" category.

**Objective LU-8.3:** Agricultural lands not currently used for farming but which have soils or other characteristics which make them suitable for farming shall not be developed in a way that would preclude future agricultural use.

**Objective LU-8.4:** Discourage uses in agricultural areas that are not compatible with long term agricultural production.

**Objective LU-8.5:** Support farming by permitting limited small scale farm services and visitor serving uses in agricultural areas.

In addition to the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element, the following policies shall be used to accomplish the above objectives:

**LU-8a:** Unless allowed by Policy OS-1c or OS-2c on pages 178 and 181, limit extensions of urban services into any agricultural production area to parcels with a health or safety problem. Out-of-service area agreements are the preferred method of extending service in such cases.

**LU-8b:** Apply a base zoning district of agriculture for any land area designated on the land use plan map for agriculture. Other overlay zoning districts may be applied where allowed by the agricultural land use category. Add an agricultural services zoning district or combining district to the zoning ordinance.

**LU-8c:** Use rezonings, easements and other methods to insure that development on agricultural lands does not exceed the permitted density except where allowed by the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element.

**LU-8d:** Deny general plan amendments which convert lands outside of designated urban service areas with Class I, II, or III soils (USDA) to an urban or rural residential, commercial, industrial, or public/quasi public category unless all of the following criteria are met:

- 1) The use is not in an agricultural production area and will not adversely affect agricultural operations.
- 2) The supply of vacant potential land for the requested use is insufficient to meet projected demand.
- 3) No areas with other soil classes are available for non-resource uses in the planning area.
- 4) An overriding public benefit will result from the proposed use.

Amendments to recognize a pre-existing use are exempt from this policy. Public uses such as parks and sewage treatment plants may be approved if an overriding public benefit exists

## **2.1.9 Preservation of Scenic or Biotic Resources Areas**

Sonoma County has many areas with important biotic resources or scenic qualities which are especially vulnerable to the impacts of development. These include wetlands, tidal lands, dunes, sea cliffs, marine terraces, headlands, watershed areas, unique geologic formations and rare or endangered plant or animal habitats. Often, these resources physically limit the manner in which these areas can be developed. The types of uses and intensities of development that are compatible with preservation of these resources must be considered together with the owners concerns about the potential effects of any development restrictions on property values.

**GOAL LU-9:** The uses and intensities of any land development shall be consistent with preservation of important biotic resource areas and scenic features.

**Objective LU-9.1:** Accomplish development on lands with important biotic resources and scenic features in a manner which preserves or enhances these features.

In addition to policies in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Elements, the following policies shall be used to accomplish the above objectives



**LU-9a:** Establish maximum densities and/or siting standards for development in community separators, scenic landscape units, critical habitats, riparian corridors, and scenic corridors.

**LU-9b:** Use incentives to encourage voluntary easements when considering development on lands with important biotic or scenic resources.

**LU-9c:** Develop programs for preservation and enhancement of important biotic resource areas with emphasis on lands surrounding the Laguna de Santa Rosa and San Pablo Bay.

## **2.2 RESIDENTIAL USE POLICY**

Two residential land use categories are used on the land use plan maps, urban residential and rural residential. The urban residential category may be utilized only within an urban service area. Maximum residential densities are shown on the land use plan maps. While other land use categories may permit limited or incidental residential use, only these shall be considered residential use categories. The designation criteria shall be applied when considering future plan amendments. Additional standards applicable to development on residential lands may be included in the zoning and subdivision ordinances and in specific or area plans or local area development guidelines.

### **2.2.1 Policy for Urban Residential Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category includes land planned for a full range of urban services for residential development. It accommodates a variety of housing types, such as stick-built and manufactured homes, and all tenure types, depending upon the density assigned on the land use maps.

#### **Permitted Uses:**

Primary land uses in high density residential areas are attached single family and multi-family dwellings and mobile home parks.

Primary land uses in medium density residential areas are single family, clustered, and multi-family dwellings and mobile home parks.

Primary land uses in low density residential areas are detached single family, clustered, and attached dwellings.

Secondary land uses in all of the above areas include "second units" ("granny units"), guest houses, home occupations, small scale home care and group care facilities, churches, and public and private schools.

#### **Permitted Residential Densities and Development Criteria:**

Permitted residential density ranges from one to twenty units per gross acre and is shown on the land use map. Three density ranges are included which provide for a variety of housing types as described above. Building permit approval shall require connection to public sewer and/or water. Residential densities on the land use maps are based upon availability of urban services and infrastructure, land use compatibility, environmental suitability, projected growth, neighborhood character, and other factors in previous plans.

High density residential areas range from 12-20 units per gross acre. Density bonus units and "second units" are in addition to permitted density. Design review is required for all multi-unit structures and for projects of 4 or more units.

Medium density residential areas range from 6-12 units per gross acre. Density bonus units and "second units" are in addition to permitted density.



Low density residential areas range from 1-6 units per gross acre. New development shall be compatible with the existing neighborhood character.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. Lands shall be within a designated urban service area.
2. Adequate water, sewer, public safety, park, school services and other necessary infrastructure shall be available or planned to be available.
3. Lands shall have convenient access to designated arterial or collector roads.
4. Lands shall not be subject to unacceptable risks such as flooding, geologic, noise, or other hazards.
5. For high or medium density residential use, lands shall have convenient access to commercial uses and community services.
6. any applicable planning area policies.

## **2.2.2 Policy for Rural Residential Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category provides for very low density residential development on lands which have few if any urban services but which have access to county maintained roads.

**Permitted Uses:** The primary use shall be detached single family homes. Secondary uses include attached dwellings, farming, small scale animal husbandry, home occupations, small scale home care and group care facilities, public and private schools and churches, and other uses incidental to and compatible with the primary use. Consistent with policy LU-6d on page 39, this category will allow application of a rural residential district which limits agricultural activities or an agricultural and residential district which allows unlimited animal and crop production on parcels of 2 acres or more. "Second units" ("granny units") may be considered where also compatible with existing neighborhoods.

**Permitted Residential Density and Development Criteria:** Densities range from one to twenty acres per dwelling as shown on the land use map. Maximum density may be applied based upon the following: similar density of existing lots in the surrounding area, suitable soils for septic disposal, available water, environmental suitability, access to arterial or collector roads, proximity of commercial services and public services and facilities, and no significant impacts on agriculture and resource production activities. Lot sizes smaller than one and one-half acres shall not be created if the residence is to be served by individual well and septic system. New lots may be as small as one acre if the residence is to be served by a public water system. New development should preserve the existing rural character.

Public schools must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6e on page 39. Private schools and churches must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6f on page 39.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. the area does not have soils suitable for agricultural production.
2. the area does not include substantial agricultural uses.
3. lands have access to a County maintained road.
4. lands shall have enough groundwater for individual wells.
5. lands shall have sufficient permeability for individual septic systems.
6. any applicable planning area policies.

## **2.3 COMMERCIAL USE POLICY**

The land use plan includes three categories of commercial uses. "General Commercial" permits all types of commercial use and is applied only to lands within urban service areas.

"Limited Commercial" allows a smaller range of commercial uses and may be applied to areas either outside or inside urban service areas. In rural community areas, this category may limit commercial uses to retail and service uses which are local-serving. In rural locations without water and sewer services, commercial activities

may be further limited. The "Limited Commercial" and "General Commercial" categories also provide opportunities for mixed residential and commercial uses on a single site where the residential use is not intended to be the primary use.

The "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" use category allows for visitor serving uses such as restaurants, lodging, developed campgrounds, resorts, marinas, golf courses, and similar types of uses.

Additional standards shall be expressed in the zoning and subdivision ordinances. In some areas of the county, additional standards may be set by planning area policies, specific or area plans, or local area development guidelines.

### **2.3.1 Policy for General Commercial Areas**

**PURPOSE AND DEFINITION:** The General Commercial category provides sites for intense commercial uses which serve a mix of business activities and the residential and business community as a whole rather than a local neighborhood. These uses provide for comparison shopping and services which are ordinarily obtained on an occasional rather than daily basis. This category is also intended to provide opportunities for a mix of residential and commercial use in urban service areas.

**Permitted Uses:** All commercial uses except regional shopping centers are allowed. Primary uses range from department stores and specialty shops to space extensive businesses such as paint, tire, carpet, lumber, home materials, and feed stores. Wholesale and heavy commercial uses and services are also included. Professional, administrative, financial, medical and general business offices which have more than 5,000 square feet of gross floor area require this category. Residential and general commercial uses may be combined in a single development where the residential use is clearly compatible with and secondary to the commercial use. This category also provides for consideration of a single-family residence in place of commercial uses allowed by zoning. The zoning ordinance may further define the uses which are permitted within this category and the bulk, height, coverage and other standards for such development.

**Development Intensities and Criteria:** Structures generally are not expected to cover more than 50 percent of the site or exceed thirty-five feet in height. Additional height may be considered if a reduction in coverage is provided which results in no overall increase in building intensity. Commercial uses shall require design review approval and on-site parking.

Mixed residential and general commercial use may be considered where urban services are available and as part of a master site development plan. In such cases, residential use may only be allowed as a secondary use in conjunction with and clearly compatible with the commercial use.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. lands shall be located within an urban service area.
2. adequate public services shall be available or shall be planned to be available.
3. lands shall be located on or have convenient access to arterial or collector highways.
4. lands shall be near other commercial uses, but shall not occur in strips along highways.
5. lands shall not be located in environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas such as floodways or fault zones.
6. any applicable planning area policies.

### **2.3.2 Policy for Limited Commercial Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category provides sites where commercial activities are limited. Particular limitations may be specified in policies for each planning area. Limited commercial land is intended to accommodate retail sales and services for the daily self sufficiency of local rural or urban neighborhoods or communities in keeping with their character. This category is also intended to provide opportunities for a mix of residential and commercial use in urban service areas. This category also provides for consideration of a single-family residence in place of commercial uses allowed by zoning.



**Permitted Uses:** The range and/or scale of permitted uses vary by location and may be expressed in planning area policies. The zoning ordinance may also further define uses permitted in this category and the bulk, height, coverage and other standards for such development. Residential and limited commercial uses may be combined in a single development within urban service areas.

**Permitted Development Intensities and Criteria:** New lots shall not be smaller than 1.5 acres on individual wells and septic systems or 1.0 acre on public water. Structures generally are not expected to cover more than 50 percent of the site or exceed thirty-five feet in height. Additional height may be considered if a reduction in coverage is provided which results in no overall increase in building intensity. Commercial uses shall require design review approval and on-site parking.

Mixed residential and commercial use may be considered where urban services are available and as part of a master plan for the site. In such cases, the residential use is a secondary use allowed only in conjunction with and compatible with the commercial use.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. lands shall be located on or have convenient access to an arterial or collector highway.
2. the amount of land designated for limited commercial shall be consistent with population growth projected for the local market area. Only very limited amounts of land are intended for this use outside urban service areas.
3. within the unincorporated communities shown on Figure LU-2 on page 31, lands shall be close to other commercial uses or to local population concentration.
4. outside of the unincorporated communities shown on Figure LU-2 on page 31, clusters of limited commercial uses shall not be permitted.
5. lands shall not be located in scenic corridors, except within the above unincorporated communities.
6. in rural areas, lands may be limited to a single parcel and be restricted to that level which can be served by an individual well and septic system.
7. any applicable planning area policies.

### **2.3.3 Policy for Limited Commercial - Traffic Sensitive Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category provides sites for uses allowed in the Limited Commercial category, but which are severely constrained by traffic congestion. Particular traffic impact limitations may be specified in policies for each area or in the zoning ordinance.

**Permitted Uses:** The range and/or scale of permitted uses vary by location and by traffic impact as in the "Limited Commercial" category. Average daily traffic generated by various limited commercial uses has been calculated by the Institute of Transportation Engineers and is periodically published in a technical manual "Trip Generation".

**Permitted Development Intensities and Criteria:** Same as for Limited Commercial areas, but may be further limited by traffic levels specified in the zoning ordinance. The specified average daily traffic levels will be used in conjunction with the "Trip Generation" manual published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers in order to determine the intensity and type of uses permitted.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following criteria:

1. those listed for the Limited Commercial category.
2. lands are located in an area which is subject to severe traffic congestion and nearing or in excess of roadway or intersection capacity anticipated in this plan or in an applicable specific or area plan.

### **2.3.4 Policy for Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category provides sites for both outdoor recreation uses and the commercial service needs of visitors and travelers. Its purpose is to limit this type of development to those appropriate sites.



**Permitted Uses:** Primary uses include outdoor recreation facilities and tourist commercial uses, including golf courses, tennis and racquet clubs, marinas, race tracks, shooting ranges, and similar uses in private ownership. Other uses include campgrounds, recreational vehicle parks, indoor lodging, indoor recreation facilities, visitor information centers, museums, restaurants, and other uses oriented to the needs of visitors. Where specified by planning area policy, this category provides for consideration of a single family residence in place of commercial and recreation uses allowed by zoning. Otherwise, residential use is limited to one caretaker unit for each parcel with recreational or commercial development. The zoning ordinance may further define the uses permitted by this category and the bulk, height, coverage and other standards for such development.

**Permitted Development Intensities and Criteria:** Lots shall not be smaller than 1.5 acres on individual wells and septic systems or 1.0 acre on public water. Structures and parking generally are not expected to cover more than 50 percent of the site or exceed thirty-five feet in height. Additional height may be considered if a reduction in coverage is provided which results in no overall increase in building intensity. Lodging facilities may not exceed 50 rooms per site in rural areas and 200 rooms per site in urban service areas. Lodging facilities with up to 100 rooms per site in rural areas may be permitted where serviced by public sewer provided, however, that such use is compatible with and does not adversely affect adjacent agricultural, resource and rural residential uses. Design review shall be required for commercial and recreational development in this category.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. lands shall have convenient access to a county or state maintained road, preferably a designated arterial or collector.
2. the site shall be outside of an agricultural production area.
3. outside the unincorporated communities shown on Figure LU-2 on page 31, clusters of parcels with recreation and visitor serving commercial use designations shall be avoided.
4. any applicable planning area policies.

## **2.4 INDUSTRIAL USE POLICY**

The land use plan includes two industrial use categories, "General Industrial" and "Limited Industrial." These categories show lands which are needed to provide jobs and services for county residents and businesses. The general industrial category allows all industrial uses but is restricted to urban service areas. The limited industrial category allows a smaller range of uses and may also be applied outside urban service areas. Additional development standards shall be included in the zoning and subdivision ordinances. Further standards may be required by a specific or area plan or by local area development guidelines.

### **2.4.1 Policy for General Industrial Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category provides sites for industrial activities and employment which require urban services and which primarily serve an urban population. The intent of the category is to assure that industrial development is compatible with adjacent land uses, infrastructure and environmental quality.

**Permitted Uses:** All industrial uses may be allowed. The primary use shall be production or assembly of products. Typical uses include manufacturing goods, warehousing, research facilities, machine shops, contractor's storage, and processing plants. Offices incidental to the primary use are allowed. Residential uses shall be limited to one caretaker unit per lot. Secondary uses may include minor commercial services. The zoning ordinance may further define the uses permitted in this category and the bulk, height, coverage and other standards for such development.

**Permitted Development Intensities and Criteria:** Sewer and water service shall be available. Structures are generally not expected to cover more than 50 percent of the site or exceed sixty-five feet in height. Additional height may be considered if a reduction in coverage is provided which results in no overall increase in building intensity. Design review shall be required for all industrial development projects. New lots may not be smaller than 20,000 square feet. Development shall be compatible with the environment, urban services, and adjacent land uses.

**Designation Criteria** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. lands shall be located within an urban service area.
2. adequate public services shall be available or shall be planned to be available.
3. lands shall be located with convenient access to an arterial or collector highway.
4. the amount of land so designated shall be consistent with the projected employment within the planning area.
5. lands shall not be located in hazardous or environmentally constrained areas.
6. any applicable planning area policies.

## **2.4.2 Policy for Limited Industrial Areas**

**Purpose and Definition** The "Limited Industrial" land use category provides sites for development to meet service and employment needs where the range or scale of industrial uses is limited. Factors which may limit these uses are lack of public services, incompatible adjacent land uses, and adverse environmental impacts. Industrial parks are included in this category as well as land extensive industrial development.

**Permitted Uses:** Limits on the range or intensity of industrial uses vary by location. Permitted uses may be expressed in the planning areas policies or specific plans for industrial areas. In general, this category includes resource related industrial uses not expected to need the full range of urban services, such as lumber mills and concrete and asphalt plants. Residential use shall be limited to one caretaker unit per parcel. The zoning ordinance may further define the uses permitted in the category and the bulk, height, coverage, and other standards for such development.

**Permitted Development Intensities and Criteria:** Structures are generally not expected to cover more than 50 percent of the site or exceed sixty-five feet in height. Additional height may be considered if a reduction in coverage is provided which results in no overall increase in building intensity. New lots shall not be smaller than 1.5 acres on individual wells and septic systems or 1.0 acre on public water. All new industrial uses shall require design review.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. lands shall be designated to recognize an existing permitted use or to serve the projected employment needs of the planning area.
2. lands outside urban service areas shall have adequate water and septic suitability.
3. lands shall have convenient access to an arterial or collector highway.
4. lands shall be located near population concentrations.
5. lands shall not be in environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas.
6. outside of the unincorporated communities on Figure LU-2 on page 31, lands shall not be located in a scenic corridor.
7. any applicable planning area policies.

## **2.5 PUBLIC AND QUASI PUBLIC LAND USE POLICY**

**Purposes and Definition:** This category provides sites which serve the community or public need and are owned or operated by government agencies, non profit entities, or public utilities.

**Permitted Uses:** Uses include schools, churches, libraries, governmental administration centers, fire stations, cemeteries, airports, hospitals, sewage treatment plants, waste disposal sites, etc. The land use map may show the specific type of public use. In these cases, other public uses shall not be allowed.

**Permitted Development Intensities and Criteria:** Designation of public/quasi public sites on the Land Use Plan shall be confined to the actual area of public/quasi public use. Amendments to add this designation must meet all of the following:

1. ownership or long term lease by a government agency, other non-profit entity or public utility.
2. adequate road access.



3. lands are not suitable for and will not adversely affect resource production activities.
4. any applicable planning area policies.

## **2.6 RESERVED**

## **2.7 AGRICULTURAL LAND USE POLICY**

The land use plan includes three agricultural use categories, "Land Intensive Agriculture", "Land Extensive Agriculture", and "Diverse Agriculture." Each category permits the full range of agricultural uses. Density for parcels in agricultural categories was not based solely upon a consideration of the amount of land that it would take to create an economically viable agricultural parcel. Densities also take into consideration such factors as lack of infrastructure, distances from public services, access, conflicts with resource conservation and production, and topographic and environmental features. Proposed amendments to the land use map in these categories shall consider all of the preceding criteria.

The categories differ primarily in the types and intensities of agricultural support services, visitor serving uses and residential densities. Additional standards may be included in the zoning and subdivision ordinances and in specific or area plans, or local area development guidelines.

### **2.7.1 Policy for Land Intensive Agricultural Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category shall enhance and protect lands capable of and generally used for the production of food, fiber, and plant materials. The soil type and climate support relatively high production per acre of land. The objective in land intensive agricultural areas shall be to establish densities and parcel sizes which are conducive to continued agricultural production.

#### **Permitted Uses:**

**Agricultural Production:** Production of all food, fiber and plant materials.

**Agricultural Processing:** Facilities for the processing of any agricultural product grown or produced primarily on site or in the local area, storage of agricultural products grown or processed on site, and bottling or canning of any agricultural product grown or processed on site.

**Agricultural Services:** Small scale agricultural support services limited by standards in the zoning ordinance which:

1. minimize conflicts with adjoining agricultural and residential uses, and
2. limit the number of employees to three or fewer and require a use permit for more than one employee.

**Visitor Serving Uses:** Tasting rooms and stands for the sale and promotion of products grown or processed in the county. New restaurants or any type of lodgings are not permitted in this category.

**Agricultural Employee Housing:** Farm worker and farm family housing as defined in the Agricultural Resources Element. Seasonal farm labor housing subject to state and county codes.

**Other Resource Uses:** Surface mining operations consistent with the Aggregate Resources Management Plan. Operations are subject to the standards of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance.

**Other Uses:** Community service facilities such as public and private schools, churches and granges.

**Permitted Residential Densities and Development Criteria:** Densities shall be between 20 and 100 acres per residential unit as shown on the land use maps. Generally, densities between 20 and 60 acres are applied in areas with existing lots in that range and where soil and water conditions make farming highly productive. Those



between 60 and 100 are used where soil and water necessitate larger parcels. New parcels shall be a minimum size of 20 acres.

Public schools must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6e on page 39. Private schools and churches must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6f on page 39.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet one or more of the following, in addition to any applicable planning area policies:

1. soil, climate, and water adequate for orchard or wine grape production.
2. most parcel sizes greater than 20 acres.
3. existing or historic use as orchards or vineyards.
4. area having a sub-county viticultural appellation.
5. Williamson Act Contract, Type 1 or Type 2.
6. areas which may not meet the above criteria but which are surrounded by lands in farming.

## **2.7.2 Policy for Land Extensive Agricultural Areas**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category shall enhance and protect lands capable of and generally used for the production of food, fiber, and plant materials. Soil and climate conditions typically result in relatively low production per acre of land. The objective in land extensive agricultural areas shall be to establish and maintain densities and parcel sizes which are conducive to continued agricultural production.

### **Permitted Uses:**

**Agricultural Production:** Production of all food, fiber and plant materials.

**Agricultural Processing:** Facilities for the processing of any agricultural product grown or produced primarily on site or in the local area, storage of agricultural products grown or processed on site, and bottling or canning of any agricultural product grown or processed on site.

### **Agricultural Services:**

1. Small scale agricultural support services limited by standards in the zoning ordinance which:
  - a. minimize conflicts with adjoining agricultural and residential uses, and
  - b. limit the number of employees to three or fewer and require a use permit for more than one employee.
2. Large scale agricultural support services clearly subordinate to on-site production and not adversely affecting agricultural production in the area, subject to standards in the zoning ordinance.

### **Visitor Serving Uses:**

1. Tasting rooms, stands for the sale and promotion of products grown or processed in the county.
2. Bed and breakfast inns of 5 or fewer rooms and campgrounds with a maximum of 30 sites may be permitted. Standards for such development may be included in the zoning ordinance.

**Agricultural Employee Housing:** Farm worker and farm family housing as defined in the Agricultural Resource Element. Seasonal farm labor housing subject to state and County codes.

**Other Resource Uses:** Surface mining operations consistent with the Aggregate Resources Management Plan. Operations are subject to standards of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance.

**Other Uses:** Community facilities such as public and private schools, churches and granges.

**Permitted Residential Densities and Development Criteria:** Densities shall range from 60 to 320 acres per unit as shown on the land use maps. Generally, higher densities are applied in areas with existing lots in that range. The middle range is used in the southeastern portion of the county where soil and water conditions make  $\pm$  100

acre parcels productive. The lowest densities are applied in the northwestern parts of the county. In considering subdivision of these lands, unless such lands are subject to a Williamson Act contract, one-half or three of the permitted residential lots (whichever is greater) shall be allowed to be clustered. These parcels may be as small as one and one-half acres but no larger than ten acres. The remaining lots permitted by the applicable residential density and those lots under Williamson Act Contracts shall be at least as large as the maximum density or that allowed by policy AR-8c on page 208, whichever is more restrictive.

Public schools must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6e on page 39. Private schools and churches must meet the minimum criteria set forth in LU-6f on page 39.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet one or more of the following, in addition to any applicable planning area policies. The proximity of clustered units to existing adjacent agricultural operations and residences will be considered:

1. most lot sizes in the area are 60 acres or larger.
2. The existing or historic use of land is for livestock grazing, dairy ranching, hay or similar forage crop.
3. adjacent parcels of similar use.
4. Williamson Act Contract (Type 2).

### **2.7.3 Policy for Diverse Agricultural Areas:**

**Purpose and Definition:** This category shall enhance and protect those land areas where soil, climate, and water conditions support farming but where small acreage intensive farming and part time farming activities are predominant. In these areas, farming may not be the principal occupation of the farmer. The primary purpose of this category is to protect a full range of agricultural uses and to limit further residential intrusion consistent with the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element.

#### **Permitted Uses:**

**Agricultural Production:** Production of all food, fiber and plant materials.

**Agricultural Processing:** Facilities for the processing of any agricultural product grown or produced primarily on site or in the local area, storage or agricultural products grown or processed on site, and bottling or canning of any agricultural product grown or processed on site.

#### **Agricultural Services:**

1. Small scale agricultural support services limited by standards in the zoning ordinance which:
  - a. minimize conflicts with adjoining agricultural and residential uses, and
  - b. limit the number of employees to three or fewer and require a use permit for more than one employee.
2. Large scale agricultural support services clearly subordinate to on-site production and not adversely affecting agricultural production in the area, subject to standards in the zoning ordinance.

#### **Visitor Serving Uses:**

1. Tasting rooms, stands for the sale and promotion of products grown or processed in the county.
2. Bed and breakfast inns of 5 or fewer rooms and campgrounds with a maximum of 30 sites may be permitted. Standards for such development may be included in the zoning ordinance.

**Agricultural Employee Housing:** Farm worker and farm family housing as defined in the Agricultural Resource Element. Seasonal farm labor housing subject to state and county codes.

**Other Resource Uses:** Surface mining operations consistent with the Aggregate Resources Management Plan. Operations are subject to standards of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance.

**Other Uses:** Community service facilities such as public and private schools, churches, and granges.



**Permitted Residential Densities and Development Criteria:** Densities shall be between 10 and 60 acres per residential unit, as shown on the land use map. In general, densities near the high end of the range are applied in areas with existing lots within that range as a transition between major agricultural areas and rural residential or urban uses. The minimum lot size permitted in this category shall be 10 acres except 1) where planning area policies expressly provide for a different minimum or 2) where it is demonstrated that creation of smaller lots will further Goals AR-3 and AR-4, Objectives AR-3.1 and AR-3.2, and Policies AR-3c, AR-3e and AR-4a of the Agricultural Resources Element, provided that the minimum lot size complies with policy AR-8c on page 208.

Public schools must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6e on page 39. Private schools and churches must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6f on page 39.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet one or more of the following, in addition to any applicable planning area policies:

1. an existing pattern of small lots or a mixture of small and large parcels.
2. soils suitable for crop production and adequate water for irrigation.
3. historic or existing use for farming.
4. Williamson Act contract, Type 1 or 2.

## **2.8 NATURAL RESOURCE LAND USE POLICY**

The purpose of natural resource land use policy is to protect lands used for timber, geothermal and mineral resource production and for natural resource conservation. The Resources and Rural Development category allows residences at very low densities due to lack of infrastructure, greater distance from public services, poor access, conflicts with resource conservation and production, and significant physical constraints and hazards. Proposed amendments to the land use map in this category shall consider all of the preceding criteria. The intent is that natural resource areas be managed and conserved and that production activities avoid depletion and promote replenishment of renewable resources.

### **2.8.1 POLICY FOR RESOURCES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

**Purposes and Definition:** This category allows very low density residential development and also is intended to:

1. protect lands needed for commercial timber production under the California Timberland Productivity Act.
2. protect lands within the Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA).
3. protect lands for aggregate resource production as identified in the Aggregate Resources Management Plan.
4. protect natural resource lands including, but not limited to watershed, fish and wildlife habitat and biotic areas.
5. protect against intensive development of lands constrained by geologic hazards, steep slopes, poor soils or water, fire and flood prone areas, biotic and scenic areas, and other constraints.
6. protect lands needed for agricultural production activities that are not subject to all of the policies of the Agricultural Resource Element.
7. protection of County residents from proliferation of growth in areas in which there are inadequate public services and infrastructure.

It is further the intent of this category that public services and facilities not be extensively provided in these areas and that development have the minimum adverse impact on the environment.

**Permitted Uses:** Single family dwellings, resource management and enhancement activities including but not limited to the management of timber, geothermal and aggregate resources, fish and wildlife habitat, and watershed. Livestock farming, crop production, firewood harvesting and public and private schools and churches are included. Lodging, campgrounds, and similar recreational and visitor serving uses provided that they shall not be inconsistent with the purpose and intent of this category. The extent of recreational and visitor serving uses may be further established in planning area policies.



The category also allows resource related employee housing, processing facilities related to resource production as well as incidental equipment and materials storage, provided that the use is consistent with any applicable resource management plans. Geothermal uses are limited to the primary KGRA. Aggregate resource uses are limited to those consistent with the Aggregate Resources Management Plan.

**Permitted Residential Densities and Development Criteria:** Residential density ranges from 20 to 320 acres per unit as shown on the land use maps. In general the higher densities are applied in areas with relatively less constraints, better access, closer proximity to some services, and existing parcels in that range. Lower densities are generally applied in areas with more severe constraints, high sensitivity to impacts, poor access, greater distance to services and/or high resource development potential. Minimum parcel size for new parcels is 20 acres, except that clustered development may be approved with a protective easement or other restriction on the remaining large parcel which indicates that density has been transferred to the clustered area from the remaining large parcel. Standards and densities for resource related employee housing shall be established in the zoning ordinance.

Public schools must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6e on page 39. Private schools and churches must meet the minimum criteria set forth in LU-6f on page 39.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet one or more of the following, in addition to any applicable planning area policies:

1. lands with severe constraints such as steep slopes, areas with faults or landslides, "high" or "very high" fire hazard, marginal or unproven water availability, or limited septic capability.
2. lands with natural resources.
3. lands with vulnerability to environmental impact.
4. to add lands for geothermal power generation facilities, the following criteria must be met;
  - a. agricultural lands or other land uses will not be adversely affected.
  - b. the natural resources of the area will be protected.
  - c. adequate public services, including roads, will be available.

### 3.0 PLANNING AREA POLICIES

#### 3.1 SONOMA COAST / GUALALA BASIN

The Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin planning area runs the 40 mile length of the Pacific Coast margin from the Gualala River to the Estero Americano. In addition to several coastal communities, it extends inland to include Annapolis, Cazadero, Duncans Mills, Bodega, Freestone, Camp Meeker, and Occidental. Roughly paralleling The San Andreas Fault Zone, the rugged Sonoma Coast is a scenic area of regional, state, and national significance, with nearly vertical sea cliffs and sea stacks along the shoreline, dunes, marine terraces, coastal uplands, and headlands. In the north, the Gualala River South Fork extends inland into the coniferous forests of the western Mendocino Highlands.

This planning area is also the most sparsely populated of the nine planning regions due to its relative remoteness and inaccessibility. In 1980 the 5,400 residents mostly lived in the various small villages. Outside of these communities, rural settlement is very sparse. The region's economy is primarily oriented to recreation and tourism, commercial fishing, timber production, and sheep ranching. Residences, originally planned as second homes, including Sea Ranch and Bodega Harbor, are not increasingly occupied by permanent residents.

The land use plan projects 3,000 new residents for this area resulting in a population of 8,500. 2,780 jobs are expected, with the greatest gains associated with the recreation and tourism industries. The average household size is expected to decrease from 2.34 to 2.25 persons per household. The number of households is expected to reach 3,670. Table LU-5 on page 54 shows the projected population and job growth and housing needs.

Adequate housing and commercial development is needed to serve the resident population and visitors but must be consistent with continued agricultural production, commercial fishing, timber, and management and maintenance of scenic landforms and viewsheds.

Most new residential development is planned in Bodega Bay, where a full range of public services can be efficiently provided. The present alignment of Highway 1 through this area is a major development constraint due to traffic congestion. The Coastal Plan limited residential development in Bodega Bay based on construction of a Highway 1 bypass.

Increased tourism may result in an imbalance between local and tourist oriented commercial growth. Visitor serving uses, particularly lodgings, are often located near scenic resources. Too many facilities in sensitive scenic areas may harm the unique qualities of the coast which are protected in the Coastal Act and local coastal plan.

**Objective LU-10.1:** Provide most of the new housing in Bodega Bay. Provide residential development in rural areas at very low densities to maintain local resources.

**Objective LU-10.2:** Balance residential and commercial development in Bodega Bay where adequate public services allow for residential and commercial expansion. Encourage mix of price and rent levels, and phase growth with improvements to Highway 1 consistent with Phase I and II of the Coastal Plan.

**Objective LU-10.3:** Designate Bodega Bay the major retail and service center for the Coast. Permit limited opportunities for new commercial activities in Bodega, Occidental, Cazadero, The Sea Ranch, Annapolis, Duncan's Mills, Jenner, Stewarts Point and Camp Meeker in keeping with their size and character.

**Objective LU-10.4:** Limit the scale of any new visitor and tourist oriented uses and confine them primarily to existing communities and existing locations. Assure that they are compatible with and protect the area's natural, undeveloped scenic character. Avoid these uses along roads between Highway 1 and Warm Springs Dam.

Table LU-5: Sonoma Coast / Gualala Basin.  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	6,500	8,500
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
Unincorporated Area		6,500	8,500
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.04	2.25
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
Unincorporated Area			
Year Round	--	3,170	3,740
Total	4,163	4,690	6,090
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	1,870	2,780
Basic	- -	280	330
Population Serving	- -	1,590	2,450

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.



**Objective LU-10.5:** Limit new industrial development to resource related uses, primarily to the fishing industry in Bodega Bay and to the timber industry in Annapolis and Cazadero.

**Objective LU-10.6:** Maintain very low residential densities on resource lands outside the communities due to lack of public services and importance of resource protection.

**The following policies shall be used to achieve the above objectives:**

**LU-10a:** Apply the urban residential use category only within the urban service boundaries of Bodega Bay. Maintain densities of one unit per acre or lower in other communities.

**LU-10b:** Encourage construction of new housing for low and moderate income households in "Housing Opportunity Areas" in the Coastal Plan. Consistent with the Housing Opportunity provisions in the Coastal Plan, a maximum density of 10 units per acre may be achieved on lands so designated in the Coastal Plan if 25% affordable housing is provided. Achieving a density higher than 4 units/acre consistent with the Housing Opportunity provisions does not necessitate a general plan amendment.

The following parcels as designated on the 1988 equalized rolls are appropriate for Phase 1 development as shown in the Coastal Plan:

AP 100-180-30 and 53

AP 100-210-30

AP 100-180-22 (+ 4 acres adjacent to and south of the Tides)

AP 100-100-01 & -02

The following parcels as designated on the 1988 equalized rolls are appropriate for Phase 2 development:

AP 100-180-22 (residual + 8 acres) & -51 (portion)

AP 100-210-35 (12.5 acres)

**LU-10c:** Phase residential growth in Bodega Bay with the construction of the Highway 1 bypass, as expressed in the Coastal Plan.

**LU-10d:** Assign densities for Camp Meeker, Timber Cove, Jenner, Bridgehaven, Rancho del Paradiso, Pacific View, West Beach, Sereno Del Mar, Carmet, Salmon Creek, Valley Ford, and communities along Austin Creek to reflect existing lot sizes due to service and environmental constraints. Policy No. 7 from Attachment A of the Lower River Plan shall remain unaffected by the adoption of this plan. The propriety of retaining such policy which allows a potential for additional residential density shall be considered at such time as the County reviews and updates the Lower River Plan in accordance with Policy LU-1a on page 28.

**LU-10e:** Limit the "General Commercial" use category to seven acres within the Bodega Bay urban service boundary.

**LU-10f:** Use the "Limited Commercial" category for existing and any needed new local commercial uses in Annapolis, Bodega, Bodega Bay, Cazadero, Occidental, and Sea Ranch. Outside these communities, apply the "Limited Commercial" designation only to existing uses and limit their expansion. The 4 acres of Limited Commercial land use in Annapolis shall be exclusive of any power lines.

**LU-10g:** Use the "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" category for any tourist oriented use within an unincorporated community. Outside of these communities, avoid new designations of this category except to recognize existing uses.

**LU-10h:** Design discretionary projects in any commercial or industrial categories in harmony with the natural and scenic qualities of the local area. Give natural landscapes precedence over man made features.

**LU-10i:** Use the "Limited Industrial" category for resource support facilities: In the Bodega Bay area, use it to support the commercial fishing industry, including storage and processing facilities. In Annapolis and Cazadero, apply it for timber related industrial uses, if needed.

**LU-10j:** Locate fishing related industrial uses which do not require urban services near Bodega Bay. Locate other fishing related industrial uses close to resource production areas.

**LU-10k:** Require a 640-acre minimum lot size for new parcels created in the "Land Extensive Agriculture," and "Resources and Rural Development" categories within the Coastal Plan boundary.

**LU-10l:** Avoid location of recreation and visitor serving and resource related commercial or industrial uses in close proximity to one another.

**LU-10m:** Allow connection of urban services which directly relate to and support the fishing industry in Bodega Bay and which cannot be located within the existing community. Use an out-of-district agreement in such cases.

**LU-10n:** In Bodega Bay, if water supply does not prove adequate to all uses designated by the land use plan, reserve a minimum 30% of the projected available amount for the following priority uses:

- (1) provision of at least 50 units of low/moderate housing.
- (2) uses supporting the fishing industry.
- (3) local serving commercial uses.

**LU-10o:** Consider all residential development as year round housing.

**LU-10p:** Consistent with policy AR-6b on page 206, the Sonoma Coast Villa (APN 103-020-06) will be recognized as a conforming restaurant and lodging facility with a maximum of 30 rooms. Any such uses must support the sale and promotion of Sonoma County agricultural products and not adversely affect adjacent agricultural or resource areas.

**LU-10q:** As allowed by policy AR-9b on page 209, establish a design review process for barns and similar agricultural support structures within the 200' State designated Highway 116 corridor.

**LU 10r:** Consider adopting a manual of local area development guidelines comprised of policies from previous specific plans and new policies consistent with this plan.

**LU-10s:** In the Coastal Zone, a bed and breakfast inn may be permitted by use permit within the Rural Residential land use category, provided that the parcel is served by both sewer and water and is at least one acre in size. No accessory structure shall be used for rental occupancy and an owner or operator shall reside within the structure.

### 3.2 CLOVERDALE / NORTHEAST COUNTY

The Cloverdale/Northeast County planning area includes the city of Cloverdale and the community of Geyserville. The rugged Mendocino Highlands on the west and the Mayacmas Mountains on the east surround the fertile Russian River Valley, including Dry Creek and Alexander Valleys. The area is also rich in other resources, including geothermal steam, construction aggregates, and water for domestic and agricultural use. Lake Sonoma and the Russian River also provide many recreational opportunities. Lands outside of the valley floors are severely constrained and relatively inaccessible.

The land use plan provides for a population of 13,800, a gain of 4,820 residents. 87 percent of this is planned to occur within Cloverdale. Average household size would decrease from 2.62 to 2.46 necessitating a total 5,600 housing units. Employment is projected to increase to about 5,700. While agriculture, geothermal development,



and manufacturing are the primary sources of employment major growth is primarily in the retail and service sectors.

Table LU-6 on page 58 shows the projected population, employment and housing units for the Cloverdale/Northeast County planning area.

Lake Sonoma and increased tourism related to the wine industry will create pressure for additional recreation and visitor serving uses.

Demand for rural residential uses may increase in the agricultural valleys due to their scenic value and proximity to urban areas. Resource production must be regulated to avoid conflicts with other land uses, damage to the river, and loss of agricultural land. Many of the hillside areas are subject to severe constraints, poor access and shortage of services.

Lands within Cloverdale's sphere of influence include large vacant commercial and industrial parcels which currently lack urban services. Also, some commercial and industrial uses have developed outside of Cloverdale's ultimate urban boundary. Lands within the city's sphere also need to be retained for urban residential development to meet housing needs. Clear policy is needed to guide the type and location of urban development around Cloverdale to assure that public services are provided.

**Objective LU-11.1:** Retain agricultural lands in Dry Creek, Alexander, Oat and Knights Valleys in agricultural production.

**Objective LU-11.2:** Accommodate new commercial uses primarily in Cloverdale and secondarily within Geyserville's urban service boundary.

**Objective LU-11.3:** Retain large parcel sizes within Cloverdale's urban expansion boundary to provide for efficient urban residential development. New industrial or urban residential uses within the expansion area may occur only after the full range of public services are available.

**Objective LU-11.4:** Allow expansion of the Geyserville urban service boundary only when adequate services are available to serve the additional lands.

**Objective LU-11.5:** Continue to regulate aggregate and geothermal resource development to minimize adverse impacts. Limit uses in the KGRA to those which do not conflict with geothermal exploration and production.

**The following policies shall be used to achieve these objectives:**

**LU-11a:** Use the following criteria for approving discretionary projects in the "Limited Commercial" and "General Commercial" categories within Geyserville's urban service area:

- 1) the use is in keeping with the scale and character of the community.
- 2) the proposed use specifically serves local area needs or the needs of visitors and tourism.
- 3) the design of any structure is compatible with the historic architecture of the community.

**LU-11b:** Use the following criteria for approving discretionary projects in the "Limited Industrial" category within the Geyserville urban service area:

- 1) the use is in keeping with the rural character of the community.
- 2) the use does not involve heavy manufacturing or heavy industrial uses and does not use or produce flammable, explosive, or noxious materials.
- 3) the site is adequately screened from the roadway and adjacent residential or commercial uses.

**LU-11c:** Additional development in the "Limited Commercial" category for the Alexander Valley Store, Dry Creek Store, and Jimtown Store shall not include lodgings or restaurants and will not adversely affect adjacent agricultural or resource uses.



Table LU-6: Cloverdale/N.E. County  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	10,500	13,800
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Cloverdale		5,300	8,200
Unincorporated Area	- -	5,200	5,600
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.66	2.46
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Cloverdale			
Year-round	- -	2,220	3,480
Total	- -	2,260	3,529
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	--	1,740	2,110
Total	1,805	1,870	2,260
Planning Area			
Year-round	--	3,960	5,590
Total	--	4,130	5,789
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	4,680	5,730
Basic	- -	2,590	2,960
Population Serving	- -	2,090	2,770

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.

**LU-11d:** The Chateau Souverain, Paulsen, Geyser Peak, and Asti wineries are designated as "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" to allow existing or proposed wineries and associated restaurants or lodging facilities. Any uses on these sites must support the sale and production of Sonoma County agricultural products and not adversely effect adjacent agricultural or resource areas.

**LU-11e:** The KOA, Preston, and American Trails Campgrounds are designated as "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" to recognize existing campground uses. Expanded uses must be campground related.

**LU-11f:** Avoid additional "General Commercial", "Limited Commercial" and "Limited Industrial" designations outside the urban service boundaries of Cloverdale and Geyserville. Consider proposals to designate single parcels as "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" to allow small restaurants, lodgings, and related facilities only if:

- 1) the site is outside of Dry Creek and Alexander Valleys;
- 2) the use involves the restoration of a designated county landmark and does not require any new structures or major additions or the use is an improved campground or guest ranch near a major recreation area.
- 3) the use will not adversely affect adjacent agricultural or resource uses;
- 4) traffic levels will maintain an acceptable level of service on existing roadways and will not interfere with the movement of farm vehicles;
- 5) adequate water supply is available for fire suppression and domestic use and;
- 6) adequate access is available for emergency vehicles.

**LU-11g:** Use the following criteria for approving discretionary projects within the "Limited Commercial" designation adjacent to Lytton Station Road.

- 1) the proposed use is specifically related to agricultural production or serves other resource related commercial needs.
- 2) the proposed use is compatible with adjacent residential and agricultural areas.
- 3) based upon a visual analysis, the proposed project is found compatible with the Highway 101 Scenic Corridor and any adverse visual impacts are mitigated.
- 4) buildings are flood proof and no filling of the flood plain would occur.

**LU-11h:** Prepare a specific or area plan for the community of Geyserville prior to any expansion of the urban service area. The update shall include an evaluation of the availability of services, impacts on adjacent agricultural uses, and impacts on the scenic corridor and shall include design guidelines.

**LU-11i:** Avoid extension of the urban expansion boundary for Cloverdale east of the Russian River or west of Highway 101 into the Oat Valley.

**LU-11j:** Use zoning to limit residential subdivisions within the urban boundary of Cloverdale to expansion of existing uses until annexation occurs or an assessment district is formed.

**LU-11k:** Use zoning to limit industrial development within the urban expansion area of Cloverdale, except for expansion of existing uses, until annexation occurs or an assessment district is formed. Use the following criteria for discretionary projects for expansion of existing uses:

- 1) adequate water supply is available for fire suppression.
- 2) frontage improvements meet city standards.

**LU-11l:** Use the Aggregate Resources Management Plan and Geothermal Resources Management Plan as the policy documents for development of aggregate and geothermal resources. Avoid terrace mining in the Alexander Valley.

**LU-11m:** The intent of the "Limited Industrial" land use designation for the gravel processing operation on APN 116-190-21 is to recognize the existing use. The designation shall not be used as a precedent for additional industrial uses in the area.



**LU-11n:** Proposed amendments of the land use map for properties subject to the Franz Valley Area Plan shall be considered in light of policies contained in that plan.

**LU-11o:** The Land use category designation for APN 140-070-24 shall be amended to the Recreation and Visitor Serving category or other appropriate category if the application presently in process for a motel and restaurant (File UP 88-611) is approved.

**LU-11p:** The existing use of APN 116-190-43, although a non-conforming use, shall be allowed to be maintained, restored, and undergo minor expansion consistent with policy LU-1f from page 29.

**LU-11q:** Notwithstanding policies LU-3c on page 33 and policies PF-1d and PF-1e on page 377 - 378, a connection to CSA #26 (Geyserville) may be considered for APN 140-180-12, 19, 38, 39, and 51, provided that the following criteria are met:

1. Sewer service facilities are designed to serve development consistent with the land use plan.
2. The district certifies that service capacity is available.
3. Connection is authorized by out-of-service area agreement.

### 3.3 HEALDSBURG AND ENVIRONS

The Healdsburg and Environs planning area is located in north central Sonoma County. High quality wines are produced from the vineyards in Dry Creek Valley and the Russian River Basin. The Basin is also used for gravel mining and recreation. Adjacent valley floors are subject to flooding. The steep and geologically unstable hillsides of the Mendocino Highlands on the west have limited access and are primarily used as grazing lands. The Mill Creek area has extensive timber stands.

Healdsburg and Windsor are the two urban centers and are located along the Highway 101 corridor. Areas outside of the valley floors and lower foothills are relatively inaccessible and sparsely populated. Employment is provided by agriculture, manufacturing, and service industries.

The land use plan serves a total population of 45,500, an increase of 26,000 residents over the 1980 level. Most future growth is expected in Healdsburg and Windsor. The rural area is projected to have little growth. Employment is projected to increase to over 19,000. Major growth is expected in the service and retail sectors with the establishment of a commercial center in Windsor, the redevelopment of downtown Healdsburg, and the growth of the tourism industry. Table LU-7 on page 61 shows the projected population, housing and jobs.

The unique agricultural, resource, scenic, and recreational values of this planning area create development pressures and land use conflicts. At issue is the protection of agricultural and resource lands, the extent of urban development in physically constrained areas with few services, the location of visitor serving uses, and the extent of urban service areas for Windsor and Healdsburg.

**Objective LU-12.1:** Manage terrace and instream mining of aggregates in the middle reach of the Russian River so that potential adverse impacts are minimized.

**Objective LU-12.2:** Make Windsor and Healdsburg the commercial and industrial centers for the planning area. Avoid additional commercial and industrial uses and tourist related businesses in the rural areas of this region.

**Objective LU-12.3:** Maintain compact urban boundaries for Windsor and Healdsburg. Avoid extension of urban services beyond designated boundaries. Retain large parcel sizes within the future expansion area of Healdsburg to allow for efficient development upon annexation.

**The following policies shall be used to achieve the above objectives.**

**LU-12a:** Use the Aggregate Resources Management Plan to identify and designate sites for extraction of aggregate resources. Prohibit terrace mining in the Alexander Valley.



Table LU-7: Healdsburg and Environs  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	26,200	45,500
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Healdsburg	- -	9,500	14,800
Unincorporated Area	- -	16,700	30,700
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.25	2.58
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Healdsburg			
Year-round	- -	3,930	6,220
Total	- -	3,990	6,270
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	--	7,680	11,380
Total	5,510	7,970	11,670
Planning Area			
Year-round	--	11,610	17,600
Total	--	11,960	17,940
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	9,380	14,240
Basic	- -	4,350	5,460
Population Serving	- -	5,030	8,780

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.

**LU-12b:** The intensity of residential use (density) allowed by the land use plan map within any area designated for natural resource uses shall be reflective of the general level of environmental and physical constraints of the area, its accessibility to urban areas and other goals, objectives, and policies of this plan. More intense use of a single parcel because it is less constrained than surrounding lots may adversely affect the demand for the costs of providing services and the rural character of the general area and shall therefore be avoided. Generally, residential densities permitted on environmentally constrained lands within the Healdsburg and Environs area shall not exceed the density indicated on the land use maps.

**LU-12c:** Avoid additional "Limited Industrial" and "Limited Commercial" designations outside Healdsburg and the urban service area of Windsor.

**LU-12d:** Use the following criteria for consideration of amendments to add "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" designations;

- 1) the amendment is consistent with the Agricultural Resources Element
- 2) the use involves the restoration of a designated county landmark and does not require new structures or major building additions or the use is an improved campground or guest ranch located near a major recreation area.
- 3) uses other than historic restorations are incidental to and compatible with the primary resource use of the parcel.
- 4) the use does not adversely impact adjacent agricultural or other resource uses.
- 5) project traffic will not adversely impact the level of service or interfere with the movement of farm equipment, and
- 6) adequate law enforcement, fire protection services, and water supply for fire suppression and domestic use are available.

**LU-12e:** Expansion of the Healdsburg sphere of influence west of Highway 101 does not conform to the intent of this plan.

**LU-12f:** Use zoning to limit residential and commercial development within the urban boundary of Healdsburg prior to annexation or formation of an assessment district.

**LU-12g:** Encourage annexation of the Fitch Mountain area to Healdsburg once the property owners have established a mechanism to improve streets, drainage, sewer, water, and electric facilities to city standards.

**LU-12h:** The service area and sphere of influence of the Windsor Water District shall conform to the urban service area on the land use map. Limit future changes of the urban boundary of Windsor to parcels bisected by the boundary. Any added parcels are subject to the standards and policies of the Windsor Specific Plan.

**LU-12i:** Encourage assembly of existing parcels for integrated redevelopment projects within the Windsor Redevelopment Area shown on the land use map. When two or more parcels are aggregated for this purpose, the land use map may be interpreted as allowing 1) the land use shown for any of the aggregated parcels or 2) public and quasi-public uses. This interpretation is subject to the following additional limitations:

- 1) the project, on referral of an application, must be found consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and found to further the purpose of area rehabilitation by the Redevelopment Agency.
- 2) the project must be found consistent with the applicable goals and policies of the general plan.
- 3) the project must not have a detrimental effect on the health, safety, or welfare of the surrounding area.

Process rezonings concurrently with the project.

**LU-12j:** Use the following criteria for consideration of expansion of the Public/Quasi Public category for the Rio Lindo Adventist Academy.

- 1) any housing must be associated with the school.



- 2) adequate services, including water, streets, and sewage disposal are available.

**LU-12k:** The intent of the "Limited Industrial" land use designation for the gravel processing operation on APN 88-220-22 is to recognize the existing use. The designation shall not be used as a precedent for additional industrial uses in the area.

**LU-12l:** Proposed amendments of the land use map for properties subject to the Franz Valley Area Plan shall be considered in light of policies contained in that plan.

**LU-12m:** Assessor's Parcel Number 065-090-05 is a 40 acre parcel located outside the urban service boundary for the Windsor area, designated "Rural Residential: 5 acres per dwelling unit". Assessor's Parcel Number 065-150-29 is a 64.55 acre parcel located within the urban service boundary for Windsor, designated "Urban Residential: 4.5 dwelling units per acre" and for a proposed high school/community park. Oak Hill Estates, a California Limited partnership wishes to develop APN 065-090-05 and 065-150-29 jointly as one project, including a transfer of residential density currently assigned to APN 065-150-27 to APN 065-090-05 and extension of public sewer and water service to APN 065-090-05. Said density transfer will be permitted, subject to compliance with all of the following:

- 1) That the development of APN 065-090-05 to a residential density greater than one dwelling per 5 acres shall occur only as part of an application that includes the development of APN 065-150-29.
- 2) That the residential density of APN 065-090-05 shall not exceed one dwelling per 1 acre based on site specific environmental suitability.
- 3) That any increase in the number of residential dwellings on APN 065-090-05 shall be subtracted from the maximum number of dwelling units permitted on APN 065-150-29.
- 4) That a portion of APN 065-150-29, an area of 15 acres, the location of which is acceptable to the Healdsburg High School District officials, is dedicated free of encumbrance to the County of Sonoma except for an existing sewer assessment, for development and use as a school and/or park site prior to recording any final map for the project provided a minimum of 240 units is approved on APN 065-150-29 and APN 065-090-05.
- 5) That a pedestrian access shall be provided between the aforementioned school site and the County Regional Park east of the project site and shall be improved and offered for dedication to the County along with other subdivision improvements.

**LU-12n:** Assessor's Parcel Number 065-060-03 is an 11.45 acre parcel which is the subject of a lot line adjustment to increase its area and a general plan amendment to the RRD 40 designation (File No. 88-199). Two substantial dwellings are located on the property. This existing use, although a non-conforming use to the RRD 40 designation, shall be allowed to be maintained, restored and undergo minor expansion consistent with policy LU-1f on page 29.

### 3.4 RUSSIAN RIVER AREA

The Russian River Planning Area extends from the Laguna de Santa Rosa westward to Austin Creek. It includes the Russian River resort area, Forestville, Guerneville, Monte Rio, Guerneville Park and Rio Nido. Many residential areas originally developed as second homes have now been converted to permanent residences. Cazadero and Forestville provide limited commercial services and more concentrated residential areas although they remain essentially rural.

The Russian River and redwoods provide the setting for extensive recreational activities. Redwoods are also a valuable natural resource. Apple orchards and vineyards are the chief agricultural endeavor.

The land use plan for the Russian River area is based upon a population of 15,800 and employment of 4,020.

In the future, a larger share of the resident workforce will be able to secure local jobs reducing the outcommute. About 75 percent of the employment is projected to be in population serving industries, reflecting the importance



of tourist commerce. The total number of households will increase by one fourth but this number includes conversion of some seasonal dwellings to year round occupancy.

Table LU-8 on page 65 shows the projected population, employment and housing units.

The Russian River planning area has many existing parcels created by "paper subdivisions" which could not be developed due to steep slopes, inability to support septic systems, or lack of water. Others were developed as second homes during the heyday of the River as a resort. Since the 1970's, many second homes have been converted to permanent residences, increasing pressure to provide urban services.

Four communities now provide some urban services, although only Forestville and Guerneville have both public sewer and water systems. Along the river there are many small water systems which have problems providing adequate service to existing development.

Flooding is a major development constraint along the Russian River. Improvements have been substantial in both residential and commercial areas, and resulting impacts of flooding have become more costly. Risks to health and safety and to property are likely to increase as existing parcels continue to develop within the floodplain.

The visual character and the economy of the area is tied to its natural resources. Protection of redwood groves and the river system is important to the community, particularly with respect to wastewater discharge. Resource industries and tourist attractions are also important.

Another issue in this area is growth and development in Forestville. Specific issues which need to be addressed include the amount of additional development that could be absorbed without changing the rural character or straining public services, how to make available commercial and industrial opportunities to provide local employment, and how to preserve the desirable environmental qualities of the area such as riparian habitats and ridgelines.

In 1986 the Board of Supervisors appointed a 9 member citizens advisory committee to recommend land use policies for the community. The committee recommended a series of land use policies which support retention of a small town community. These policies are included in the policies below.

**Objective LU-13.1:** Avoid new urban service areas in the Russian River Planning Area.

**Objective LU-13.2:** Limit new uses within the floodway of the Russian River, as designated on the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), to recreation and visitor serving commercial uses without permanent structures. Prohibit amendments to the land use map which would allow new residential subdivisions within the boundaries of the 100-year flood event.

**Objective LU-13.3:** Maintain a balance of commercial development between local serving and visitor oriented uses. Guerneville shall remain the primary commercial center of the area. Forestville, Rio Nido, Monte Rio and Cazadero are secondary commercial centers with primarily local serving commercial uses in keeping with the existing character and scale of the community.

**Objective LU-13.4:** Maintain the "rural village" character of Forestville through design and development standards which support small scale development with substantial open space and native landscaping.

**Objective LU-13.5:** Assure that the number and scale of recreation and visitor serving commercial uses in the resource and agricultural areas is compatible with maintenance of the quality of the natural resource. Consider natural resource production and maintenance as the primary use of the land.

Table LU-8: Russian River  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	14,120	15,800
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
Unincorporated Area	- -	14,120	15,800
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.44	2.28
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	- -	6,020	7,180
Total	8,420	8,620	9,680
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	3,350	4,020
Basic	- -	1,110	1,230
Population Serving	- -	2,240	2,790

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.



**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives.**

**LU-13a:** Phase residential and commercial development within the Forestville urban service boundary to allow the community facilities and services adequate time to absorb new growth, and to maintain the community character. For any project of 10 or more housing units, require a precise development plan or master plan which specifies the maximum number of new residential units to be built per year.

**LU-13b:** Require design review for major subdivisions within the Forestville urban service boundary. Design review approval shall assure that:

- 1) project scale and design is consistent with existing rural village character.
- 2) project design gives priority to natural landscape over development, and preserves and enhances significant natural features.
- 3) the project retains open space amenities associated with a rural lifestyle.
- 4) the project provides for a variety of housing types and costs.
- 5) where appropriate to the natural terrain, houses are clustered to maximize open space. To the extent allowed by law, require a long term scenic easement for the undeveloped portion of the property.
- 6) the project includes pedestrian access connecting new homes with nearby commercial area.

**LU-13c:** Prepare an assessment of alternative route alignments for Highway 116 through Central Forestville.

**LU-13d:** Until a public parking facility is constructed in Guerneville, require new or expanded commercial or residential uses to meet the on-site parking requirements of the zoning ordinance.

**LU-13e:** Avoid new urban service areas or entities.

**LU-13f:** Require building envelopes on all tentative subdivision maps which minimize damage to redwood trees and which protect the redwood ecosystem. Show on the map the precise location of any redwood trees within the building envelope which are greater than two feet in diameter at four feet above the ground.

**LU-13g:** Use the "Limited Commercial" category outside urban service area boundaries only for uses that were existing as of 1986.

**LU-13h:** Outside urban service area boundaries, consider new recreation and visitor serving commercial uses in the "Resources and Rural Development" category subject to the following criteria:

- 1) the use is located close to a major recreational area such as the Russian River.
- 2) the use is compatible with the primary resource use of the parcel.
- 3) where practical the use will retain existing redwood trees and will not result in substantial damage to the redwood ecosystem.
- 4) the use would not adversely affect adjacent agricultural lands.
- 5) the use would not adversely affect the level of service on roadways.
- 6) adequate water supply is available for fire suppression and domestic use.
- 7) adequate police and fire protection are available, and
- 8) the use will not have an adverse visual impact on a scenic corridor or scenic landscape unit.

**LU-13i:** Define the boundary of Forestville as that of the elementary school district for purposes of project referral.

**LU-13j:** Consistent with prior and existing visitor-serving use of the historic structures of the Korbey winery, a restaurant open to the public may be permitted in one of the historic structures notwithstanding policy in the "Land Intensive Agriculture" category. Any such use must support the sale and promotion of Sonoma County agricultural products and not adversely affect adjacent agricultural or resource areas or uses.

**LU-13k:** The "Limited Commercial" designation of certain parcels along Highway 116 between Guerneville Road and Ross Station Road (APNs 84-060-05; 84-090-13; -27; 84-100-20, -21, -42, and -43) is intended



for agriculturally related commercial uses only. The land use designations for APN 84-100-20, 42, and 43 are a combination of "Limited Commercial" and "Rural Residential". Notwithstanding the density shown on the land use maps, these three parcels may be subdivided to separate the commercial and residential areas.

**LU-13l:** The area along Guerneville Road between the Laguna de Santa Rosa and Laguna Road which has been designated with the Rural Residential land use category (including but not limited to APN 130-45-33, - 34) and may have home-scale and 4-H agricultural uses.

**LU-13m:** Consider adopting a manual of local area development guidelines comprised of policies from previous specific plans and new policies consistent with this plan.

**LU-13n:** As allowed by Policy AR-9b on page 209, establish a design review process for barns and similar agricultural support structures within the 200' State designated Highway 116 Corridor.

**LU-13o:** The existing development of parcels 130-060-31 and 130-060-30, although nonconforming, shall be recognized because the parcels are within the Graton Sewer District. Parcel 130-060-31 has 54 mobile home units and one single family dwelling on  $\pm$  8 acres. Parcel 130-060-30 currently has 4 low-income housing units. These two parcels may repair, maintain or replace in kind the existing housing stock. Additional units including second dwelling units are not permitted.

**LU-13p:** As allowed by the "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" land use category, allow consideration of a single family residence as the primary use of a property so designated in this planning area.

### 3.5 SANTA ROSA AND ENVIRONS

The Santa Rosa and Environs planning area includes the flat terrain of the Santa Rosa Plain, several small valleys surrounded by rolling hills and the more rugged mountainous areas of the Sonoma and Mayacmas Mountain ranges. Major drainages include Santa Rosa and Mark West creeks, and the Laguna de Santa Rosa.

In 1980, seventy percent of the area's population lived in urban areas along the Highway 101 and 12 corridors. Significant amounts of rural residential development are located south and west of the cities and in isolated "pockets" to the east and northeast of the planning area.

In 1980, 52 percent of the county's jobs were located in this planning area. This employment base draws a large workforce which commutes from the other parts of the County. Although agriculture is no longer the dominant economic force, many vineyards and grazing and dairy operations remain.

This region is projected to absorb 38 percent of the County's growth through 2005. Santa Rosa and Larkfield are expected to increase their share of growth in the planning area from 70 to 90 percent, including annexation of urban areas now in the County. Larkfield/Wikiup is expected to nearly triple in population. Table LU-9 on page 68 shows projected growth in population, jobs and housing.

The principal land use issues confronting the Santa Rosa region are:

- (1) The ability of public services to accommodate projected residential, commercial and industrial growth.
- (2) Protection of agricultural lands. Proximity to urban Santa Rosa has resulted in pressure to convert such lands to rural residential use.

**Objective LU-14.1:** Avoid urban development within the urban service boundary of Santa Rosa until annexation except where allowed by Specific or Area Plan as of 1986.

**Objective LU-14.2:** Limit future rural residential development to "infill" within areas already designated for such use.

Table LU-9: Santa Rosa and Environs  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	151,200	190,000
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Santa Rosa	- -	117,000	165,000
Unincorporated Area	- -	34,200	25,000
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.31	2.36
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Santa Rosa			
Year-round	- -	49,610	70,870
Total	- -	50,150	71,410
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	- -	16,090	9,830
Total	15,630	16,470	10,240
Planning Area			
Year-round	- -	65,700	80,700
Total	- -	66,620	81,650
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	73,700	98,640
Basic	- -	25,390	35,980
Population Serving	- -	48,310	62,660

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.



The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives.

**LU-14a:** Require full urban improvement standards and services for discretionary commercial, industrial and urban residential projects within the urban service boundary.

**LU-14b:** Consider requiring joint city-county design review for projects within the Santa Rosa urban service boundary.

**LU-14c:** Encourage assembly of existing parcels for integrated redevelopment projects within the Roseland Redevelopment Area shown on the land use map. When two or more parcels are aggregated for this purpose, the land use map may be interpreted as allowing 1) the land use shown for any of the aggregated parcels or 2) public and quasi public uses. This interpretation is subject to the following additional limitations:

- 1) the project, on referral of an application, must be found consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and found to further the purpose of area rehabilitation by the Redevelopment Agency.
- 2) the project must be found consistent with the applicable goals and policies of the general plan.
- 3) the project must not have a detrimental effect on the health, safety, or welfare of the surrounding area.

Process rezonings concurrently with the project.

**LU-14d:** Lands designated "urban reserve" in the South Santa Rosa Area Plan are preferred for urban expansion. Allow urban development only after 2000 and require prior to development compliance with the South Santa Rosa Area Plan (particularly Section 5.23).

**LU-14e:** The intent of the land use designation for APN 65-330-07,-09,-10, -11,-12, and -14, 65-350-17 and 65-370-02, -01 is to allow for reconfiguration of these seven existing parcels into four parcels.

**LU-14f:** Recognize existing commercial, industrial, and public/quasi public uses outside urban service boundaries. Limit expansion of these uses to that which does not necessitate extension of water and sewer.

**LU-14g:** Avoid amendments to include additional commercial or industrial use outside urban service areas.

**LU-14h:** Unless otherwise provided in existing specific or area plans, designate lands within the Santa Rosa urban service area as "rural residential" in order to hold them for future annexation by the City. Maintain densities in these areas at the lower end of the range for this category.

**LU-14i:** Require visual screening of mining operations along scenic roadways.

**LU-14j:** Parcels designated "General Industrial" between the Windsor and Airport urban service areas shall not be developed to industrial use until annexed by one of the service areas.

**LU-14k:** Designate the Brooks-Ward area "Limited Industrial" to recognize the eventual urban development allowed in the South Santa Rosa Plan. Use zoning to prevent further subdivision and urban development until the conditions established in Section 5.36 of that plan for this development have been met. Retain the land use designation "Light Industry/Planned Residential" in the plan but amend it to authorize interim uses consistent with the new zoning, such as single family dwellings on existing lots, provided water, septic and other standard conditions are met.

**LU-14l:** Proposed amendments of the land use map for property subject to the Franz Valley Plan shall be considered in light of policies contained in that plan.

**LU-14m:** Notwithstanding the general requirement for a 10-acre minimum lot size in the "Diverse Agriculture" category, the areas within the Bennett Valley Area Plan along Bennett Valley Road shall be allowed to establish lot sizes in conformance with zoning in effect as of December 31, 1986.



**LU-14n:** The "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" designation is applied to "Morton's Warm Springs" (APN 55-040-32) to recognize the existing outdoor recreation use. Additional Recreation and Visitor Serving designations in the Sonoma Valley are limited to urban service areas or Kenwood.

**LU-14o:** Consider amendment of the urban design standards of the South Santa Rosa Plan to allow freeway oriented, attached, self-illuminating signs for commercial use.

**LU-14p:** Consider adopting a manual of local area development guidelines comprised of policies from previous specific plans and new policies consistent with this plan.

**LU-14q:** The "Resources and Rural Development" designation is applied to Cloverleaf Ranch (APNs 58-020-08 and 09) to recognize the existing youth camp, riding academy and daycare uses.

**LU-14r:** The "Diverse Agriculture" and "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" designations applied to Graywood Ranch (APNs 51-020-06, 10, 19, 32 and 33 and 51-010-13 and 17 are intended to accommodate an approved development consisting of 18 residential parcels, a 35 room hotel and a winery, each on separate parcels, an agricultural parcel and a residual parcel. It is the intent of the general plan to:

- (1) exempt these parcels from the 10 acre minimum lot size requirement of the "Diverse Agriculture" land use category; and
- (2) allow modification of the size and location of these parcels without further amendment of the land use map.

Any proposal to increase the total number of lots or the size of the hotel shall require a general plan map and/or text amendment.

**LU-14s:** At such time as the Bennett Valley Area plan is reviewed and updated, consider an expansion of the area subject to Bennett Valley design review to include the scenic landscape unit east of the boundary of the area plan.

**LU-14t:** The urban service boundary shall be extended to encompass assessors parcel # 039-034-47 to allow a 14 unit subdivision of 70 acres. The extension is based on the following considerations: 1) the property is subject to a pipeline subdivision application; 2) the property owner has, as part of such application, offered a scenic easement which will prohibit further development of the property beyond the 14 unit subdivision.

### 3.6 SEBASTOPOL AND ENVIRONS

The Sebastopol planning area includes the City of Sebastopol, the communities of Graton, Bloomfield and Valley Ford, and the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Extensive areas of rural development are mixed with small farms and orchards. Most area residents live in single family homes in rural residential areas which are intermixed with apple orchards, vineyards, truck farming and other agricultural activities. Although the region is known for its apple production, especially apples, its agriculture has become increasingly diversified in recent years. Apple production has declined. Many residents commute to work outside the area.

The land use plan for this area serves a population of 18,300 (unincorporated area). Employment located within the planning area is projected to be about 9,000 allowing for increased local employment opportunities for area residents and a possible decrease in out commuting. Most new employment is projected to be in trade and services rather than agriculture or "basic" industries.

The area's economy is fairly well balanced, with about half of the 1980 employment in agriculture, manufacturing and other basic industries and half in retail trade and services to local residents. Many residents commute to work in Santa Rosa and other employment centers outside the Sebastopol planning area.

Table LU-10 on page 71 shows the projected population, jobs, and housing needs.

Table LU-10: Sebastopol and Environs  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	25,160	28,400
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Sebastopol	- -	7,000	10,100
Unincorporated Area	- -	18,160	18,300
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.59	2.49
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Sebastopol			
Year-round	- -	3,110	4,550
Total	- -	3,140	4,580
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	- -	6,620	6,850
Total	6,650	6,880	7,120
Planning Area			
Year-round	- -	9,730	11,400
Total	- -	10,020	11,700
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	7,390	9,090
Basic	- -	3,430	4,060
Population Serving	- -	3,960	5,030

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.



Land use issues in this planning area involve urban development in Sebastopol and Graton, strip development along Highway 116, and conversion of orchards to rural residences.

Policies below attempt to resolve three concerns related to urban development in Sebastopol: (1) providing enough land for urban development where there are few large vacant parcels and many inefficiently developed small parcels; (2) whether the city should extend sewer and water into unincorporated areas prior to annexation; and (3) whether the county should provide services for urban land uses on lands intended for future city expansion.

In Graton there is a potential need for a public water system to allow full urban development in the area with existing sewer service. Alternative use of existing vacant or under used structures in central Graton is another issue.

Numerous businesses front on Highway 116 particularly in a two mile strip between Cooper and Hessel Roads. While existing commercial uses are recognized, new highway oriented businesses should be avoided to minimize traffic and safety problems and to encourage location of these uses in nearby urban service areas.

In rural areas conversion of orchards to rural residential development and conflicts of this development with remaining agricultural uses and practices is the most significant issue.

**Objective LU-15.1:** Avoid commercial, industrial, and urban residential uses within the Sebastopol urban service area until annexed by the city.

**Objective LU-15.2:** Avoid new commercial and industrial designations in the Highway 116 corridor.

**Objective LU-15.3:** Assure that commercial development in rural portions of the area is of a scale, intensity, and design which is compatible with the area's rural and scenic character.

**Objective LU-15.4:** Avoid conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. Development shall be compatible with protection of agricultural lands and agricultural production.

**Objective LU-15.5:** Avoid urban development which would significantly affect the natural vegetation, wildlife habitat or rare or endangered species in the designated wetlands and riparian areas along the Laguna de Santa Rosa, Estero Americano, Atascadero Creek and Blucher Creek. Design rural development to conserve groundwater, soil resources and conifer forests to the maximum extent feasible.

**The following policies shall be used to achieve the above objectives:**

**LU-15a:** Avoid extension of the urban service area boundary for Sebastopol unless:

- 1) vacant land within the existing boundaries will accommodate no more than five years of planned growth.
- 2) the City of Sebastopol has sufficient unallocated service capacities to serve the additional area without adversely affecting the level of service to existing and future users.
- 3) natural resources and agricultural production would not be adversely affected.

**LU-15b:** Prior to development of a public water system for Graton, reevaluate the location of its urban service area boundary for Graton. Avoid expansion of the urban service area boundary west of Atascadero Creek or east of Gravenstein Highway.

**LU-15c:** Avoid urban level services within the sphere of influence of the City of Sebastopol prior to annexation except where consistent with the policies of the Public Facilities Element. Development in that area prior to annexation may be served by rural services and shall be designed to permit realization of the urban potential upon annexation.



**LU-15d:** Avoid the "General Commercial" and "General Industrial" land use categories outside the Sebastopol and Graton urban service areas.

**LU-15e:** Consider designation of vacant sites or sites with vacant buildings east of Bowen Street and south of Graton Road in Graton from commercial/industrial use to urban residential use if surrounding areas, water resources and service levels are not adversely affected.

**LU-15f:** Avoid new "Limited Commercial" and "Limited Industrial" designations outside of the Sebastopol and Graton urban service areas.

**LU-15g:** Avoid discretionary projects on "Limited Commercial" or "Limited Industrial" lands unless:

- 1) it specifically serves the commercial, service, employment or agricultural processing needs of the planning area.
- 2) it is compatible with adjacent residential or agricultural uses.
- 3) it wouldn't adversely affect the level of service on public roadways or interfere with the movement of farm vehicles.
- 4) visual impacts within a designated scenic corridor, will be mitigated through appropriate setbacks, landscaping, and/or screening.

**LU-15h:** Avoid additional residential density within the agricultural and resource categories except as allowed by the agricultural and "Resources & Rural Development" categories. Avoid designation of agricultural and natural resource lands to other categories.

**LU-15i:** Require that building envelopes provide a minimum 100 foot setback from any property line or other mitigations for subdivisions within an agricultural category.

**LU-15j:** Notwithstanding Policy LU-15h, the County shall consider increased density in the portion of the Harrison Grade area included in Planning Area 6 (Sebastopol) if the results of a groundwater study for the entire area prove that such increased density will not adversely impact existing development.

**LU-15k:** As allowed by Policy AR-9b on page 209, establish a design review process for barns and similar agricultural support structures within the 200' State-designated Highway 116 Corridor.

**LU-15l:** Consider adopting a manual of local area development guidelines comprised of policies from previous specific plans and new policies consistent with this plan.

**LU-15m:** A lot line adjustment application is currently pending, the result of which would be to surround APN 61-143-09 with two acre rural residential lots. In the event that such lot line adjustment application is finally approved by the County, APN 61-143-09 may be developed at RR, 2 acre density notwithstanding the contrary designation on the land use map.

**LU-15n:** The mobile home now located on APN 61-100-62 may be moved onto the adjacent five acre portion of APN 61-100-62 created by file #LLA 88-296, notwithstanding the fact that the five acre parcel is already developed with a single family residence.

**LU-15o:** Commercial uses on the 2.8 acres of AP# 027-180-20 designated "Limited Commercial" shall be restricted to agricultural service uses. AP# 027-180-20, presently consisting of 19.5 acres and bearing three different land use categories, may be subdivided into three parcels, one of which must consist of the 2.8 acres designated "Limited Commercial". Any further subdivision is contrary to this policy and the land use map.

**LU-15p:** The increase in density on APN 83-160-14 from 2 acre density to 1.85 acre density was made because the owner voluntarily elected to reduce the residential density on APN 83-120-22 from Urban Residential, 2 units per acre to Urban Residential, 1 unit per acre and also agreed to dedicate parkland on

APN 83-120-22. The net result of the proposal is a reduction of 4 units of residential density in the Forestville area. Notwithstanding the land use designation on APN 83-120-22, the property may only be developed with 4 dwelling units.

### **3.7 ROHNERT PARK - COTATI AND ENVIRONS**

The Rohnert Park-Cotati planning area is located in central Sonoma County along the Highway 101 corridor and includes Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Penngrove. Sonoma Mountain forms a continuous backdrop visible from throughout the area.

This is the smallest of the nine planning areas, but has the highest population density and the highest portion of its population within incorporated cities. Extensive rural residential development is located south and west of Cotati, around Penngrove, and in the Sonoma Mountain foothills.

Most of the area's jobs are in retail sales and services in Rohnert Park and Cotati. Many area residents commute to work in Santa Rosa, Petaluma and the Bay Area. Livestock grazing and forage crops are the predominant type of agriculture in the rural areas.

Population is projected to increase by 23,310 people, but only by 1,200 people in the unincorporated area. Jobs are projected to increase over 100 percent, increasing local opportunities for area residents and possible decreasing out-commuting. Population, jobs and housing unit projections are shown in Table LU-11 on page 75.

The principal land use issues confronting the Rohnert Park-Cotati area are:

- (1) The ability to accommodate projected residential, commercial and industrial growth, particularly since it is not clear that Rohnert Park has sufficient urban land to serve projected residential growth.
- (2) The appropriate intensity of development in the community separator areas.
- (3) Protection of agricultural and other resources, watershed lands, the Fairfield Osborn Preserve, and areas subject to seismic, slope stability, flooding and fire hazards.

**Objective LU-16.1:** Avoid urban residential, commercial, or industrial uses within the Rohnert Park and Cotati urban service areas until such lands are annexed.

**Objective LU-16.2:** Limit new commercial and industrial development to the cities and the urban service area of Penngrove, except as authorized by policies OS-1c and OS-2c on pages 178 and 181.

**The County shall use the following policies to carry out the above objectives.**

**LU-16a:** Avoid amendments of the urban service boundaries of Rohnert Park and Cotati unless:

- 1) vacant lands within existing boundaries will accommodate no more than five years of planned growth.
- 2) the applicable service entities have sufficient unallocated capacities to accommodate the additional lands and development without adversely affecting the level of service to existing and future users.
- 3) natural resources and agricultural production would not be significantly affected by the proposed urban development.

**LU-16b:** Apply the commercial and industrial categories only in the Penngrove urban service area and to sites designated for such use by Specific or Area plans in effect as of 1986.

**LU-16c:** Use the following criteria for approving discretionary projects in the "Limited Commercial" or "Limited Industrial" category.

- 1) the use specifically serves the service, employment or agricultural processing needs of planning area residents.
- 2) the use is compatible with adjacent residential or agricultural uses.



Table LU-11: Rohnert Park - Cotati and Environs  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	42,100	55,500
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Rohnert Park	- -	31,500	42,200
City of Cotati	- -	4,600	6,700
Unincorporated Area	- -	6,000	6,600
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.67	2.59
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Rohnert Park			
Year-round	- -	12,100	16,290
Total	- -	12,180	16,360
City of Cotati			
Year-round	- -	1,960	2,880
Total	- -	1,980	2,900
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	- -	1,990	2,470
Total	1,910	2,020	2,500
Planning Area			
Year-round	- -	16,050	21,640
Total	- -	16,180	21,760
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	13,160	18,220
Basic	- -	4,520	6,010
Population Serving	- -	8,640	12,210

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.



- (3) the use does not adversely affect the level of service on public roadways and would not interfere with the movement of farm vehicles.
- (4) if the use would be located within a designated scenic corridor, visual impacts can be mitigated by appropriate setbacks, landscaping, or screening.

**LU-16d:** Provide for small scale campgrounds and guest ranches if consistent with the Agricultural Resource Element and if 1) the use does not adversely affect traffic level or service and 2) adequate water, police and fire services are available.

**LU-16e:** Place conditions on discretionary projects to minimize potential adverse impacts on soil and biotic resources, wildlife, designated scenic resources, Crane Creek Park and the Fairfield Osborn Preserve.

**LU-16f:** Notwithstanding the general requirement for a 10 acre minimum lot size in the "Diverse Agriculture" category, the areas within the Sonoma Mountain Plan may be permitted minimum lot sizes as shown in that plan.

**LU-16g:** Amend the last two sentences of the first full paragraph on page 72 of the Penngrove Specific Plan to read as follows: Most parcels along Palm Avenue are designated Rural Residential, 2.5 acres/dwelling. Due to a pending development application, assessor's parcel number 047-081-40 may, upon proof of septic suitability and public water availability, be rezoned and subdivided at a 1.5 acre density.

### 3.8 PETALUMA AND ENVIRONS

The Petaluma planning area, in the southwest portion of the county, extends from Penngrove to the Marin County line and from the Sonoma Mountains, to Two Rock. Dominant natural features include the Sonoma Mountains, the rolling hills around Petaluma, and the Petaluma River and marshes. Historically, this area has been the production center for poultry and dairy products. Although the poultry industry has declined, milk has been one of the county's leading agricultural commodities.

The Petaluma area has a relatively large share of financial, communications, business services and personal services employment. However, its proximity to Marin and San Francisco, results in a daily outcommute of over 40 percent of its workforce.

The population is concentrated in Petaluma and in rural residential areas adjoining the city limits. Between 1980 and 2005, the population of the area is expected to increase to 69,500. Local jobs are predicted to double to 23,480. The major share of population and employment growth is planned to occur in Petaluma, with relatively little commercial and industrial land available in the unincorporated area. Projected population, housing and job growth are shown in Table LU-12 on page 77.

Urban service area issues in the Petaluma area are related to the capacity of existing sewer and water facilities to serve projected growth the extent of the urban service boundary, and the timing of service extensions. Agricultural issues include fluctuating markets for the dairy and livestock industry and subdivision of large agricultural parcels into residential parcels. A third issue is whether commercial or industrial development should be located outside the urban service boundaries, particularly recreation and visitor serving commercial uses associated with area recreation.

**Objective LU-17.1:** Avoid extension of Petaluma's urban service boundary and limit urban residential development to the urban service area when annexed by the City.

**Objective LU-17.2:** Make Petaluma the commercial and industrial center for the southwestern Sonoma County area. Restrict commercial uses to locations within its urban service area and to existing areas allowed by Specific or Area plans as of 1986.

Table LU-12: Petaluma and Environs  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	54,350	69,500
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Petaluma	- -	43,800	58,700
Unincorporated Area	- -	10,730	10,800
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.73	2.64
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Petaluma			
Year-round	- -	16,560	22,450
Total	- -	16,700	22,590
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	- -	3,380	3,780
Total	3,350	3,460	3,860
Planning Area			
Year-round	- -	19,940	26,230
Total	- -	20,160	26,450
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	16,360	23,480
Basic	- -	4,940	6,250
Population Serving	- -	11,240	17,230

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

Sources: (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.  
 (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan.  
 (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.  
 (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.

**Objective LU-17.3:** Limit recreation and visitor serving uses in rural areas to those existing, to those with an approved use permit, or to those consistent with the Agricultural Resources Element.

**Objective LU-17.4:** Avoid commercial and industrial development and residential densities greater than one unit per 60 acres on lands which contain important natural resources.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives.**

**LU-17a:** Include industrial lands located along Petaluma Boulevard south of Petaluma within the city's sphere of influence.

**LU-17b:** Avoid further extension of the ultimate boundary for Petaluma eastward as far as Adobe Road. Retain parcels in this area in large sizes to the maximum extent practical as a transition between urban and agricultural lands.

**LU-17c:** Use zoning to avoid new urban uses within the Petaluma urban service area prior to annexation by Petaluma.

**LU-17d:** Refer to the city of Petaluma for review and comment any application for discretionary projects within one mile of the urban service boundary.

**LU-17e:** Apply the "General Commercial" and "General Industrial" categories only to appropriate uses existing as of 1986 inside the urban service boundary. Apply the "Limited Commercial" and "Limited Industrial" categories only to appropriate uses existing as of 1986.

**LU-17f:** Use the following criteria for approval of discretionary projects in the "Limited Commercial" and "Limited Industrial" category:

- 1) the use specifically serves the service, employment, or agricultural processing needs of local area residents or the local agricultural community.
- 2) the use is compatible with adjacent residential or agricultural uses.
- 3) the use won't adversely affect the level of service on public roadways and will not interfere with the movement of farm vehicles.
- 4) if the use is located within a designated scenic corridor, mitigate visual impacts by appropriate setbacks, landscaping, and/or screening.

**LU-17g:** Limit uses at Sears Point Raceway (on APN 68-150-43, -45; 68-190-04; 68-100-24) to racing and related vehicle uses, and limited ancillary uses provided that a use permit is approved. Racing and vehicle uses means the storage, repair, fabrication, maintenance and modification of vehicles. "Fabrication" does not include assembly-line or mass production of vehicles. Ancillary uses are to be limited to timing and scoring facilities, media facilities, emergency medical facilities, concession stands and a novelty shop. Permanent lodging facilities, general commercial, industrial and manufacturing uses are not permitted.

**LU-17h:** Limit uses at Port Sonoma to those existing or approved by use permit. Permanent lodging facilities, general commercial, industrial or manufacturing uses are not permitted. For purposes of this policy, anything other than week-end occupancy of boats by their owners shall be considered within the parameters of a "permanent lodging facility".

**LU-17i:** Notwithstanding the general requirement for a 10 acre minimum lot size in the "Diverse Agriculture" category, the areas within the Sonoma Mountain Plan may be permitted minimum lot sizes as shown in that plan.



LU-17j: It is the intent of the land use map designation for APN 113-010-11 that twelve (12) acres is designated 3-acre density and the remainder is designated 200-acre density thereon. Despite B-7 zoning applied to the property through previous subdivision, a 4-lot division of the property is deemed consistent with this plan provided that an appropriate scenic easement is granted at the time of subdivision.

### 3.9 SONOMA VALLEY

The Sonoma Valley planning area extends from Bennett Valley and Kenwood south to San Pablo Bay and from the crest of the Sonoma Mountains east to the Sonoma-Napa county line. The valley and foothills are among the finest vineyard regions in the world. In the southern area, the mountains and foothills give way to an alluvial plain, estuaries, and tidal marshlands.

Population is concentrated in Sonoma and in the adjacent unincorporated communities of Agua Caliente, Fetters Hot Springs, El Verano and Boyes Hot Springs. Other communities include Kenwood and Glen Ellen. The balance of the area's population is scattered in rural agricultural and hillside areas at very low densities.

Agriculture, particularly winegrapes, and tourism are mainstays of the area's economy. Some manufacturing and service businesses exist along Eighth Street East. Over one third of local employment is in the "retail trade" and "services" sectors. Nearly one half of the local work force commutes to jobs outside the Valley.

From 1990 to 2005, population of the planning area is expected to increase by 20 percent to 41,540. Much of this growth in population (40%) is expected to occur in the City of Sonoma as the city adopted planning documents indicate that population will increase from 6,050 in 1986 to 11,800 in the year 2005. Average household size is relatively low (2.23 people per household) reflecting the higher proportion of elderly retired persons. Local jobs are projected to increase by 46 percent to about 13,500, with the greatest gains in the "services" and "retail" sectors. Projected population, housing, and job growth are shown in Table LU-13 on page 80.

The principal land use issues in the Sonoma Valley area pertain to 1) the relationship between growth and traffic congestion, 2) the boundaries and extent of urban service areas, 3) development in the Sonoma urban expansion area, 4) the amount and location of commercial and industrial uses, 5) the need to upgrade existing structures and public infrastructure, and 6) the compatibility of rural development with protection of agriculture, scenic landscapes, and resources.

The Sonoma Valley Traffic Study (1986) concluded that 100% "build out" of development allowed by various specific plans would result in unacceptable levels of congestion on several roads and would require that Highway 12 be improved to 5 lanes to accommodate traffic at an acceptable service level.

However, this land use plan and development projected in the City of Sonoma will result in the need to improve Highway 12 to five lanes between Verano Avenue and West Thomsen Avenue to maintain acceptable service levels and to alleviate existing and anticipated future congestion. Additional roadway improvements anticipated by the Land Use Plan are detailed in the Circulation Element.

Existing and projected Highway 12 capacity deficiencies, the lack of State Highway improvement funds and the absence of an off street parking maintenance district serve to limit redevelopment and growth potential within the Sonoma Valley.

Questions remain about the amount of growth that sewer and water systems can serve. Development needs to be closely correlated with availability and maintenance of public services. The extent of commercial and industrial uses along Highway 12 and in the 8th Street East corridor also has a major effect on adequacy of roads and services.

Table LU-13: Sonoma Valley  
Selected Socio-demographic Data, 1985 to 2005

	Estimated 1985	1990	Projected 2005
<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	- -	32,890	41,540
<u>POPULATION DISTRIBUTION</u>			
City of Sonoma	- -	8,350	11,800
Unincorporated Area	- -	24,540	29,740
<u>AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	- -	2.06	2.22
<u>HOUSING UNITS</u>			
City of Sonoma			
Year-round	3,390	3,910	5,620
Total	3,460	3,980	5,690
Unincorporated Area			
Year-round	10,410	11,370	12,430
Total	11,080	11,970	13,060
Planning Area			
Year-round	13,800	15,280	18,050
Total	14,540	15,950	18,750
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>			
Total Employment	- -	10,530	13,510
Basic	- -	4,440	5,620
Population Serving	- -	6,090	7,890

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 10.

- Sources:
- (1) 1985 and 1990 total housing units for the unincorporated area: 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll.
  - (2) 1990 and 2005 data for cities, and 1990 and 2005 populations for the unincorporated area: Feb. 1989 edition of the Sonoma County General Plan. 1985 housing unit data for city: California Department of Finance.
  - (3) Average household sizes: based on 1980 Census and derived from sources in (1) and (2) above.
  - (4) Employment data: Angus McDonald Assoc./Economic and Planning Systems and Sonoma County Planning Department, 1986.
  - (5) 2005 housing unit total for unincorporated area reflects the projected annexation of 142 units by the City of Sonoma.



**Objective LU-18.1:** Seek to jointly coordinate and monitor development within the City of Sonoma and the unincorporated urban service area. Discourage urban development within Sonoma's urban service boundary until annexation by the city (excluding parcels within the Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Area).

**Objective LU-18.2:** Restrict future industrial development in the unincorporated area to designated areas along the 8th Street East corridor.

**Objective LU-18.3:** Sonoma is the primary retail and service center for the Sonoma Valley. Boyes Hot Springs, Glen Ellen, and Kenwood are secondary commercial centers. Limited commercial uses shall be restricted to these areas.

**Objective LU-18.4** Implement the Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Plan and the general plan in a consistent manner. Encourage private redevelopment by providing flexibility in the range of land uses within the Redevelopment Area.

**Objective LU-18.5** Limit recreation and visitor serving uses in resource areas to low intensity or outdoor uses.

**The following policies shall be used to achieve these objectives.**

**LU-18a:** Avoid urban residential and commercial development within Sonoma's "primary sphere of influence" but outside the 1986 boundaries of the Sonoma Valley Sanitation District until annexed by the city.

**LU-18b:** In general, encourage annexation by the city prior to urban development on parcels which are within the Sonoma Valley Sanitation District and within the city's primary sphere of influence. Require annexation for urban residential development in this area. Parcels within the Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Area are exempt from these policies.

**LU-18c:** Establish procedures for joint city/county review of major projects within the City of Sonoma and the City's "area of interest" as mapped in the City General Plan. This joint review process is intended to insure that project impacts are appropriately mitigated in all affected jurisdictions.

**LU-18d:** Recognize certain existing commercial development on the Land Use Map with the "Limited Commercial" land use designation to encourage and facilitate the maintenance,, upgrading, and redevelopment of commercial structures within the Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Area.

**LU-18e:** Recognize certain identified vacant and/or residentially developed parcels along Highway 12 within the Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Area with "Limited Commercial - Traffic Sensitive" land use designations.

**LU-18f:** Develop zoning district(s) for the "Limited Commercial" and "Limited Commercial - Traffic Sensitive" categories which limit the uses allowed to specified traffic impact levels. Apply this zoning to all such designated parcels in order to limit new or expanded commercial uses to those which would result in traffic levels consistent with Objective LU-4.3 and Policies LU-4b and 4c on page 34 - 35, and the Circulation and Transit Element.

**LU-18g:** Encourage assembly of existing parcels for integrated redevelopment projects within the Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Area. When two or more parcels are aggregated for this purpose, the land use map may be interpreted as allowing 1) limited commercial land use when parcels designated "Limited Commercial" or "Limited Commercial - Traffic Sensitive" are aggregated or 2) public and quasi public uses, subject to the following minimum limitations:

- 1) The project, on referral of an application, must be found consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and found to further the purpose of area rehabilitation by the Redevelopment Agency.
- 2) The project must be found consistent with applicable goals and policies of the general plan but particularly must not result in traffic levels which exceed the level of service allowed by general plan policy.



- 3) The project must not have a detrimental effect on the health, safety, or welfare of the surrounding area.

Process any needed rezoning concurrently with the project.

**LU-18h:** Encourage and cooperate in the preparation of a community design plan for Glen Ellen. It is intended that the completed plan be submitted for review and action by the County.

**LU-18i:** Notwithstanding the general requirement for a 10-acre minimum lot size in the "Diverse Agriculture" category, the areas within the Bennett Valley Area Plan along Sonoma Mountain and Enterprise Roads designated "Diverse Agriculture", 10 and 15 acre residential density shall be allowed to establish lot size in conformity with zoning in effect as of December 23, 1986.

**LU-18j:** Use the "Limited Commercial" and "Limited Commercial - Traffic Sensitive" categories for commercial lands in communities with urban services, including Boyes Hot Springs/El Verano/Agua Caliente, Glen Ellen and Kenwood. Require that new uses meet the following criteria:

- 1) the size, scale, and intensity of the use is consistent and compatible with the character of the local community.
- 2) capacities of public services are adequate to accommodate the use and maintain an acceptable level of service.
- 3) design and siting are compatible with the scenic qualities and local area development guidelines of the local area.
- 4) siting of structures is compatible with planned infrastructure improvements such as roadway widening and undergrounding of public utilities.

**LU-18k:** Encourage the development or redevelopment of existing commercial land as a greater priority than designation of additional lands for new commercial uses. Approve new commercial designations only if they meet the following minimum criteria and where applicable comply with LU-18g, and j:

- 1) the lands are in an urban service area or in Kenwood.
- 2) the existing supply of commercial land is insufficient to meet projected needs.
- 3) service capacities, including water and sewer systems and roads, are adequate to accommodate the additional development.

**LU-18l:** The "Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial" designation is applied to "Morton's Warm Springs" (APN 50-220-51) to recognize the existing outdoor recreation use. Additional designations are limited to urban service areas or Kenwood.

**LU-18m:** Encourage the provision of public services and infrastructure for projected industrial development in the Eighth Street East Corridor. Explore mechanisms for financing sewer, water, roadway, drainage, and other improvements.

**LU-18n:** Prior to adoption of a specific plan, assessment district or other mechanism, approve discretionary industrial projects in the 8th Street East area only when they meet the following minimum criteria:

- 1) proof of adequate on-site water supply and sewage disposal is provided.
- 2) the owner agrees to inclusion in a benefit assessment district or other mechanism to finance needed public services and infrastructure.
- 3) all activities which include production or use of any toxic or hazardous materials are identified and a plan for their management included.
- 4) the use is screened from residential or agricultural uses, including a minimum 40 foot landscaped building setback along property lines abutting such uses.

**LU-18o:** Require building envelopes for all subdivision maps in the "Resources and Rural Development" category.

**LU-18p:** The existing concrete batch plant on APN 052-471-06 may be repaired, reconstructed or improved notwithstanding its land use designation.

**LU-18q:** Development on APNs 133-010-36, -40, -41, -42, -43; 133-020-01, -18, -28 and 133-030-04 may be clustered below the 600 foot elevation contour in exchange for the dedication of open space easements in perpetuity on that portion of the properties above 600 feet. Additional density may be allowed, at the discretion of the Board, if the owners of the properties subject to this policy offer fee title park or permanent open space dedications to the County for that portion of their property over 600 feet in elevation. In the event of a dedication in fee, the overall density on any such parcel shall not exceed one unit per 20 acres. This policy shall apply to that area with respect to the 1200 foot contour on APNs 133-010-30, -31, -32; 054-100-05 and -06 and the 1400 foot contour on APN 54-100-04.

**LU-18r:** The restaurant on APN 050-250-33 may be expanded by use permit, improved or repaired notwithstanding the fact that its land use designation would otherwise render it a nonconforming use.

**LU-18s:** A bed and breakfast inn on APNs 056-251-18 and -19 may be considered consistent with this plan provided the ADT generated by such use is less than or equal to that which would be generated by the "Urban Residential, 8 du/ac" designation.

**LU-18t:** If golf course uses are abandoned, no more than 15 residential units may be placed on the combined acreage represented by APNs 142-042-03, -16 and -20. The owner of these parcels may continue to utilize the existing 9-hole golf course on the properties and may expand the golf course to 18 holes. In such event, the maximum residential density shall not exceed one dwelling unit per 5 acres on that portion of the property not utilized for golf course purposes.

**LU-18u:** The request for "Limited Commercial" on APNs 128-484-33 and -34 is denied. However, in the event that a commercial use on such property is finally adjudicated or determined to be a legal non-conforming use, the Board of Supervisors expresses its intention to amend the general plan to reflect the adjudication.

**LU-18v:** APN 128-491-46 and a portion of APN 128-491-45, consisting of approximately 160 acres, are designated 100-acre density on the land use map. However, a 3-lot reconfiguration of such property may be found consistent with this plan because three dwellings already exist on the property. Except as provided by the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element, no more than one dwelling shall be allowed on each of the three parcels permitted by this policy.

**LU-18w:** APN 128-322-12 is designated "Limited Commercial". However, the parcel is included in a traffic sensitive area and has the possibility of conflicting with adjoining residential uses. Accordingly, zoning shall be used to insure that development of the parcel is limited to commercial uses generating low levels of traffic and to insure that any future commercial uses are visually and otherwise compatible with surrounding residential uses.

**LU-18x:** APNs 056-201-62, -66, -67 and -76 are designated "Urban Residential" partly because the General Plan EIR does not address the traffic impacts of 6.4 acres of "General Commercial" uses in the area. The Board would consider a General Plan amendment to a commercial land use category provided that the proposal is accompanied by adequate environmental information and proposes a traffic sensitive commercial use.

**LU-18y:** APN 050-161-16 is designated 5 acre density on the land use map. A 2-lot division of the property may be found consistent with this plan in light of the existing intensity of the use on the property provided however, that one existing residence is relocated to allow emergency access. A second unit exclusion district shall be placed on the property to minimize potential traffic impacts of any future subdivision.



**LU-18z:** A 5-lot subdivision of the 400 acres designated as APNs 127-011-05, -06, -19, and -32; and 127-022-37 may be considered consistent with this plan provided the subdivision resolves an underlying title dispute.

**LU-18aa:** A reconfiguration of APNs 127-051-72, -76; 127-061-47, -49, -50; 127-022-53 and -54 may be considered consistent with this plan in light of the topographic features of the property provided that no additional development potential results and the minimum parcel size is no less than 20 acres.

**LU-18bb:** Consider adopting a manual of local area development guidelines comprised of policies from previous specific plans and new policies consistent with this plan.

**LU-18cc:** The following policies apply to the tidal marshlands bordering San Pablo Bay:

- 1) marshes and mudflats should be maintained to the fullest possible extent to conserve fish and wildlife and to abate air and water pollution. Filling and diking that eliminate marshes and mudflats should therefore be allowed only for purposes providing substantial public benefits and only if there is no reasonable alternative. Marshes and mudflats are an integral part of the Bay tidal system and therefore should be protected in the same manner as open water areas.
- 2) any proposed fills, dikes, or piers should be thoroughly evaluated to determine their effects on marshes and mudflats and then modified as necessary to minimize any harmful effects.
- 3) to offset possible additional losses of marshes due to necessary filling and to augment the present marshes, a) former marshes should be restored when possible through removal of existing dikes, b) in areas selected on the basis of competent ecological study, some new marshes should be created through carefully placed lifts of dredged spoils, and c) the quality of existing marshes should be improved by appropriate measures whenever possible.

**LU-18dd:** APN 142-042-07 is designated 5-acre density on the land use map. A 2-lot division of the property may be found consistent with this plan even though a portion of the property may be acquired through condemnation to accommodate additional right-of-way along Stage Gulch Road.

**LU-18ee:** As allowed by policy AR-9b on page 209, establish a design review process for barns and similar agricultural support structures within the 200' State designated Highway 12 corridor. Where the scenic corridor setback established by policy OS-3c on page 182 conflicts with the setback established by County Ordinance # 1810, the latter shall apply.

**LU-18ff:** There is currently pending a general plan consistency appeal on assessors parcel # 127-022-30. Notwithstanding the designation on the land use map, the parcel may be subdivided should the density finally established as a result of such appeal allow such subdivision.

**LU 18gg:** Although not specifically designated on the land use map, the wastewater reclamation and disposal facilities project approved by the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District on July 28, 1986 by Resolution #86-1536 and its associated easements, pump stations, depth and flow measuring devices, valves, pipes and related fixtures are consistent with this plan.

#### **4.0 LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

##### **Land Use Program 1: Zoning Ordinance Maps**

**Program Description:** Prepare for adoption by the Board of Supervisors nine mapped ordinances (one for each planning region) to bring zoning countywide into conformance with the land use plan maps following their adoption.

##### **Land Use Program 2: Revisions to Zoning District Regulations**

**Program Description:** Rewrite and reorganize portions of the Zoning Ordinance to provide several resource, residential, commercial and industrial base districts with a series of related combining districts. The intent of the



program is to achieve a closer correspondence of zoning districts with the general plan use categories and policies.

**Land Use Program 3: Revisions of Previously Adopted Specific or Area Plans**

**Program Description:** Preparation of revised specific plan land use and zoning maps as necessary to be consistent with the adopted general plan. Clarify application of specific plan policies within context of general plan land use categories

**Land Use Program 4: New Specific or Area Plans for Selected Urban Service Areas**

**Program Description:** Several specific plans may be prepared for small land areas encompassing unincorporated places having sewer service to correlate land use planning with public facility and capital improvement planning.

**Land Use Program 5: Development Activity Monitoring**

**Program Description:** Development and building permit activities shall be monitored within the major use categories for each planning area for lands within each urban service area. Reports to the Board of Supervisors would be prepared on an annual basis.

**Land Use Program 6: Growth Management / Phasing of Development**

**Program Description:** The program will entail preparation of ordinances or other mechanisms such as zoning which would limit development where public services are inadequate to serve new development. The program will also evaluate means to accomplish the necessary facility improvements.

**Land Use Program 7: Transferable Development Rights Report**

**Program Description:** A report will be prepared evaluating voluntary programs to purchase and transfer development rights; a proposed program would be formulated for placing before the voters as a measure on the ballot during a general election.









**HOUSING ELEMENT**

**SONOMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
575 Administration Drive, Rm. 105A  
Santa Rosa, California 95401

Adopted by Resolution No. 86-2077  
of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
September 30, 1986

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## PREFACE

**Purpose and Authority.** The housing element of the general plan is a detailed statement of housing goals, objectives, policies and programs for unincorporated area of Sonoma County. The element is based on a comprehensive assessment of current and projected housing needs, and on an analysis of market, environmental, governmental and other factors which affect the extent to which those needs are satisfied. The purpose of the element is to provide information to the public on housing issues, and to serve as a guide for decision-making by elected and appointed officials over the 20-year time frame of the general plan.

The housing element responds to the content requirements of California law (Government Code, Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article, Article 10.6), which call for a plan that:

- evaluated the effectiveness of the existing housing element (adopted in January 1978; amended in September 1979) attaining the County's housing goals and objectives;
- assesses housing needs and evaluates resources and constraints relevant to the maintenance, development and improvement of housing; and
- sets forth a five-year schedule of actions the county is undertaking or intends to undertake to implement housing policies and achieve housing goals and objectives.

**Organization of Element.** The housing element is divided into seven sections, which address the content requirements of California law as follows:

**Section 1.0** contains an overview of housing market trends and projections, including data on population, employment and households.

**Section 2.0** identifies housing issue areas and presents overall goals relevant to each.

**Section 2.0 - 7.0** contain detailed analyses of specific housing issues, including assessments of existing and projected housing needs, and of resources and constraints relative to those needs. Each section concludes with objectives and policies designed to address identified needs.

**Section 8.0** assesses the effectiveness of County actions over the past five years in meeting housing needs, and outlines a detailed program of actions designed to address identified housing needs over the next five years.

The element also refers to a technical supplement which contains detailed data and information on sources and methods employed in analyzing housing issues.

**Consistency With Other General Plan Elements.** The thirteen elements of the Sonoma County General Plan serve as a detailed guide to the long-term physical development of the county. As such, all are interrelated, with the effectiveness of each dependent in large part on compatibility with other elements. California law recognizes the interdependence of general plan elements and requires that the plan comprise an "integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies" (Government Code, Section 65300.5).

The goals, objectives, policies and programs of the housing element are designed to be compatible and consistent with the other adopted general plan elements. However, in some instances, programs calling for further study of specific housing issues may lead to future recommendations for policy change that cannot be assessed for consistency at this time. Consistency determinations on such recommendations will be made on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the review of specific program proposals.

**Citizen Participation.** The content of the housing element reflects formal and informal input from a variety of sources. A principal source was the Housing Element Advisory Committee, appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The committee's membership included persons with knowledge of residential design, development and finance, environmental data and issues, economic development and consumer concerns. Over a six-month period, the committee reviewed housing issues and potential policies; it considered all aspects of the element

prior to its submission to the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). All committee meetings were announced and open to the public.

Following Committee review and approval, the draft element was the subject of public hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. These hearings were advertised in five different newspapers published in various areas of the county. Copies of the draft element were made available for public review at the Planning Department and at nine regional libraries; 175 copies were distributed to agencies and individuals. Altogether, the hearing process provided six separate opportunities for testimony over the four-month public review period. A total of 24 individuals or organizations, representing all economic segments of the county's population, presented oral or written testimony at these hearings.

Other sources of input included contacts with residential lenders, developers of low and moderate income housing, utility districts, staffs of other departments of Sonoma County government and of city planning agencies within the county, and with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Planning Department gratefully acknowledges the contributions of all these individuals and agencies to the housing element.

## 1.0 OVERVIEW OF THE SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING MARKET

Sonoma County's eight cities, numerous small unincorporated communities, and diverse rural landscapes accommodate a wide range of residential environments. Although limited opportunities for new large-lot rural housing remain, this once-common form of residential development is increasingly being supplanted by urban-style neighborhoods of single-family subdivisions and attached dwellings as characteristic of the county's housing stock. Many areas of the county continue to be attractive locations for retirement housing, while the Sonoma Coast, Russian River and some agricultural regions provide settings for second-home development.

A distinguishing feature of the county's housing market has been its remarkable growth during the last two decades. In the 1970s the rate of population growth was the highest among the nine counties of the San Francisco Bay region. Rapid expansion of the housing market has been accompanied by escalation of housing prices and rents. With prices and rents increasing more towards interest rates which are high by historical standards, the housing affordability problem has extended beyond low- and moderate-income households to increasingly affect middle-income housing consumers. Problems of housing availability and costs remain especially acute in the rental sector of the market. The rapid pace of growth has focused attention upon the tension between a strong demand for rural home sites and a desire to retain and conserve the agricultural heritage and landscape amenities of the county's unique countryside.

### 1.1 Housing Market Area

Although Sonoma County is a part of the greater San Francisco Bay Area region, for purposes of this plan the housing market area is defined as coterminous with the geographical boundaries of the County. However, the accessibility of the county to employment locations in Marin, San Francisco, and some other portions of the Bay Area inevitably link its housing market to the larger region. In 1980, slightly more than 17 percent of the employed residents commuted to workplaces outside the county, primarily in Marin and San Francisco. Out-commuting is especially significant in southern Sonoma County areas nearest the central Bay Area. Several thousand persons living in other counties, notably Marin, commuted to workplaces in Sonoma County. While the county undoubtedly will continue to serve as a residential location for some people who are employed elsewhere in the Bay Area, this segment's share of the housing market is likely to diminish as the county's internal economy expands and matures and as traffic congestion makes long-distance commuting less attractive. This tendency was already evident during the past decade. Data from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), for example, indicate that the number of residents commuting to jobs located within the county increased more rapidly than did the number of residents commuting to work elsewhere in the Bay Area. Housing price and rent levels considerably below those for comparable living space in Marin and San Francisco will continue to result in demand for housing in Sonoma County by persons employed in those areas.



Within the county itself, nine different geographical submarkets have been defined. As shown in Figure 1, these correspond to the nine planning areas identified in the land-use element. Detailed data by planning area are presented in the technical supplement of this element.

## 1.2 Market Characteristics and Recent Trends

During the decade from 1970 to 1980, new housing demand, as measured by growth in the number of households, expanded more rapidly than did the supply of housing units. Countywide, about 46,600 households were added, while the housing stock increased approximately 46,100 units. Although the imbalance was even greater in unincorporated areas, household growth was accommodated in part by conversion of homes held for occasional use to year-round occupancy.

**Housing Demand.** The principal determinants of housing demand include the level of employment and population, the number of households, and household income. Sonoma County's expanding economy added about 40,500 jobs during the past decade, an increase of 60 percent, while 94,800 residents were added to the population, an increase of 46 percent. Although a portion of population growth has been due to natural increase, an excess of births over deaths, about 85 percent of the growth since 1970 has been the result of net in-migration to the county from other areas of California and the nation. Some in-migration to the county is retirement related, although the largest share is associated with persons obtaining employment in the county or Bay Area.

Reflecting a nation-wide trend, the number of households (defined as a group of persons occupying a separate housing unit) residing in Sonoma County increased considerably more rapidly than population during the last decade. This trend was a consequence of reductions in average household size over time, associated with social phenomena such as higher divorce rates, older age at marriage, postponement of having children, smaller family sizes, preferences by many singles for living alone, and an increase in the share of the population which was elderly. The number of households residing in Sonoma County expanded by over 46,600 from 1970 to 1980, reaching a total of about 114,500 in 1980. During this time, average household size declined by 12 percent, from 2.92 persons per household in 1970 to 2.56 in 1980. Without any population growth, therefore, housing demand in the county would be increasing. The unincorporated portion of the county gained about 15,600 households during the decade, representing a growth rate (46 percent) only one-half that of the eight cities. Median household income was estimated to be \$28,400 in 1984. Data generally indicate that increases in household incomes have not kept pace with price inflation, in particular with increases in the shelter component of the consumer price index.

**Housing Supply.** The Sonoma County housing stock was estimated to total about 133,400 units as of January 1, 1984 -- an increase of 9,200 units since April 1980. Approximately 44 percent of the stock, 58,600 units, was located in unincorporated portions of the county. About 31 percent of the net gain in housing units between 1970 and 1980 occurred in unincorporated areas, compared to only about one-fourth of new residential construction since 1980. Housing construction in unincorporated areas has averaged 620 units on an annual basis since 1980, based upon final inspection records. Countywide, single-family units continue to dominate the new construction market. Single-family units, including mobile homes, comprised 71 percent of the new stock added since 1980, about the same share as in the 1970s. The Santa Rosa and Rohnert Park - Cotati sub-markets have accounted for six out of every ten new units constructed.

**Housing Occupancy.** About 6,300 dwellings, or five percent of the County's total housing stock in 1980, may be classified as "non-year-round" housing, including units which were seasonal, held for occasional use, vacant and boarded-up, and other vacant units not on the market. The available year-round housing stock, defined as units occupied by either owners or renters plus vacant units which were for sale or rent, totaled about 117,900 dwellings. Slightly over 2,900 year-round units were vacant in 1980, for an overall vacancy rate of just under 2.5 percent while the rental vacancy rate was 3.1 percent. About 63.5 percent of the occupied units were owner-occupied, while 36.5 percent were occupied by renters. A slight downward trend has occurred in the rate of owner-occupancy since 1970 when the rate was 64.4 percent. If this rate of owner-occupancy had been



- 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
- 3. Healdsburg and Environs
- 4. Russian River
- 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
- 6. Sebastopol and Environs
- 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
- 8. Petaluma and Environs
- 9. Sonoma Valley

— Planning Area Boundary

## Planning Areas



Figure 1

maintained in 1980, an additional 950 households would have owned their homes. In general, the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County are characterized by a higher rate of owner-occupancy, a lower vacancy rate in the ownership sector of the market, and a higher rental vacancy rate relative to the incorporated areas.

In 1980, the countywide median value of owner-occupied housing was just over \$88,000, and more than one-third of these units exceeded \$100,000 in value. The median monthly rent level reported in 1980 was \$256, with about 10 percent of the units exceeding \$400 and one-fourth renting for less than \$200 per month. A rent survey conducted in 1984 by the Santa Rosa Department of Community Development found that median monthly rents in the metropolitan area for multi-family units ranged from \$400 for a studio unit to \$565 for a three-bedroom apartment.

### 1.3 Overview of Future Growth Trends

The following sections briefly summarize projected growth in employment, population and households. For a more-detailed explanation and description of future growth trends, refer to various sections of the land-use element.

**County-wide** A robust and maturing local economy, an accessible location at the periphery of the San Francisco Bay Area, and the high level of amenities associated with coastal valley environments are expected to continue to make Sonoma County one of the fastest growing areas in Northern California. About 32,500 new jobs are projected to be created in the county from 1980 to 1990, increasing the level of employment to about 140,400 in 1990. Further expansion to 189,700 is projected by year 2005. Although natural increase (the excess of births over deaths) and retirement-related in-migration are expected to remain important sources of population growth, the largest component of future growth will be due to in-migration of persons obtaining employment in the county or the Bay Area. The increment of population growth associated with expanding in-county employment opportunities is expected to be less in the future than the historical pattern. Several factors account for this trend, including rising labor force participation rates for women, an increasing share of the population in the labor force age groups, and a continuing modest decline in the rate of out-commuting to work places in other Bay Area counties.

An additional 63,520 residents are projected from 1980 to 1990, increasing the county's population to 363,200. By year 2005, the population is projected to expand to 468,540, an increase of 56 percent over 1980. The total number of households residing in the county is projected to reach 148,490 by 1990, an increase of 34,020 over the decade, and 189,170 by year 2005.

**Cities and Unincorporated Areas.** The number of residents in unincorporated areas is projected to reach 136,150 by 1990, approximately 38 percent of the county's total population of 363,200. This growth pattern represents a continuation of the trend since 1950 of declining shares of the population residing in unincorporated areas. As the county became more urbanized, the proportion of the population in unincorporated areas declined from 63.8 percent in 1950 to 44.4 percent in 1980. This trend is projected to continue to year 2005 when only about one-third of the population, or 151,040 persons, would reside in unincorporated areas. As in the past, some growth by the County's eight municipalities is projected to be the result of annexations of adjacent residential areas which were developed in the unincorporated county. The gross change in the number of households in unincorporated areas, or growth in "new households", is more important than the net change which reflects losses due to annexations. "New household" growth is projected to be 10,240 in unincorporated areas between 1990 and 2005; the net change in the number of households of 1,730 reflects annexation of lands on which 8,510 households resided in 1990. Although all cities may potentially annex existing housing units, the major component is projected to occur in Santa Rosa, where in 1980 about 9,600 households resided in unincorporated but urbanized areas adjacent to the city.

**Planning Areas.** At the end of the 20-year planning period in 2005, about two-thirds of the county's population is projected to reside in the three most urbanized planning areas -- Santa Rosa, Petaluma, and Rohnert Park - Cotati.



The Santa Rosa planning area, with 190,000 residents, will contain 40 percent of the total county population. The highest rates of growth between 1990 and 2005 are projected to occur in the Healdsburg planning area, with an increase of 74 percent, and the Rohnert Park-Cotati planning area, with an increase of 32 percent. The major share of growth in the Healdsburg planning area is expected to occur in the unincorporated community of Windsor.

## **2.0 HOUSING ISSUES AND GOALS**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The policy and program components of the housing element use the following terminology:

**Goal.** A general statement of a desired future condition or end to which effort will be directed throughout the time horizon of a plan. A goal provides a clear sense of direction for future actions.

**Objective.** A specific, detailed statement of a desired future condition or end, which the county is committed to achieve within a stated time period. An objective expresses a short- to intermediate-term (1-5 year) target; progress towards an objective is measurable.

**Policy.** A specific statement of an action that is intended to be taken, or a means that is intended to be employed, to achieve an objective. Policies imply commitments of time and personnel, financial and administrative resources.

**Program.** A specific, organized series of actions that implement a policy. Program statements provide detailed information on the manner in which a policy will be carried out.

California law governing the content of housing elements states: "It is recognized that the total housing needs identified ... may exceed available resources ... Under these circumstances, the quantified objectives need not be identical to the identified existing housing needs, but should establish the maximum number of housing units that can be constructed, rehabilitated and conserved over a five-year time frame." Since Sonoma County's housing needs exceed available resources, the objectives, policies and programs of the Housing Element represent the maximum feasible commitment of resources to address identified needs. In the absence of an express mandatory obligation imposed by state or federal law, language contained in the draft housing element which may be construed as the self-imposition of a mandatory duty upon the county pursuant to Government Code Section 815.6 shall not be construed as mandatory; rather, it shall be construed as permissive in nature. Sonoma County's overall housing goal is the provision of "a decent home and suitable living environment" for every county resident. The more specific statements of goals which follow essentially clarify the various dimensions or components of this overriding goal; housing objectives and policies are stated at the end of Parts 3.0 - 7.0; the 1984-90 housing program is expressed in Part 8.0.

### **2.2 Housing supply, Location and Geographic Distribution**

**Issues:** Based on analyses of market trends, it is projected that an additional 10,240 households need to be accommodated in unincorporated areas between will be needed between 1990 and 2005. Issues include: The provision of a sufficient number of housing units to accommodate household growth, and the location of new residential development in relation to employment centers, urban service availability, transportation system capacity, and environmentally suitability characteristics of the land.

**Goal 1: Housing Supply.** It is the goal of Sonoma County to encourage construction of a supply of housing adequate to accommodate projected household growth in a manner consistent with available infrastructure and environmental constraints.



**Goal 2: Location of New Construction.** It is the goal of Sonoma County that the major share of new housing be constructed in the expansion areas of cities and in those unincorporated communities which have adequate urban services such as water and sewerage systems.

**Goal 3: Geographic Distribution of New Housing.** It is the goal of the County that new housing be distributed among the nine planning areas in a manner which reflects growth in employment opportunities, environmental resources and constraints and availability of urban services.

## **2.3 Housing Costs and Affordable Housing**

**Issues:** Two different forms of housing costs are distinguished: The costs to producers of providing housing services and the costs to individuals and households of consuming housing services. Producers' costs include the various expenditures by builders necessary to construct new housing as well as the costs to investors of providing rental housing services. Consumer costs may be further categorized as to expenditures required to own and occupy a home or the expenditures necessary to occupy rental housing. Issues include: The proportion of household income consumers should be expected to pay for housing; expenditures; and the means of providing an adequate supply of housing at price and rent levels which are affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

**Goal 4: Effects of County Policies on Production Costs.** It is the County's goal that its policies, regulations and procedures not add unnecessarily to the costs of producing housing while assuring attainment of other objectives regarding provision of services to accommodate residential development and conservation of agricultural, environmental and scenic resources.

**Goal 5: Production of New Affordable Housing.** It is the goal of Sonoma County to encourage production of new housing which will have prices or rents which are affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

**Goal 6: Consumer Expenditures.** It is the County's goal to encourage the attainment of a housing expenditures:income ratio that is not excessive for any household with low or moderate income.

## **2.4 Distribution of Housing Services to Population Sub-groups with Special Housing Needs**

**Issues:** Some population sub-groups have special housing needs. These needs frequently involve limited incomes, but also include other factors such as age, marital status or handicaps that limit housing opportunities. The population sub-groups which have been determined to have special housing needs are elderly persons, the migrant farmworker population, large-family households, single-parent households with children, racial and ethnic minorities, handicapped persons, and persons with emergency shelter needs. Issues include the magnitude of such needs and the appropriate means to address them.

**Goal 7: Distribution of Housing Services.** It is the goal of Sonoma County to encourage the attainment of adequate and affordable housing and a market free of discrimination for population groups with special shelter needs: the elderly, migrant farmworker households, large families, racial and ethnic minorities, handicapped persons, single-parent households with young children, and individuals with emergency shelter needs.

## **2.5 Housing Quality**

**Issues:** Housing quality concerns involve the existing housing stock, the quality of new residential construction and the conservation of existing residential neighborhoods. Issues include: the quantity and location of existing substandard units and deteriorating neighborhoods, the level of quality that should be sought in new residential construction, and the extent to which energy conservation measures should be encouraged in the construction of new units and the rehabilitation of existing units.

**Goal 8: Quality of Existing Housing Stock.** It is the goal of Sonoma county that the existing housing stock be maintained in safe, healthful and serviceable condition, with current deficiencies eliminated and future deterioration prevented, so that it may be occupied on a long-term basis.

**Goal 9: Quality of New Residential Construction.** It is the County's goal that new housing units be produced at quality levels which will assure safe and healthful living environments, while allowing some flexibility in the construction standards for new residential units.

**Goal 10: Conservation of Residential Neighborhoods.** It is the County's goal to conserve residential neighborhoods in a manner which encourages private reinvestment for upgrading and maintenance of existing housing.

**Goal 11: Neighborhood Compatibility of New Residential Development.** It is the County's goal to conserve the positive environmental and cultural qualities of residential neighborhoods by ensuring that the design of new residential development is compatible with the surrounding natural and built environment.

**Goal 12: Residential Energy Conservation.** It is the County's goal to encourage development of a base minimum level (i.e. R-19 ceiling insulation, caulking, weather stripping, low-flow showerheads, water heater blankets and pipe/duct insulation) of residential energy conservation practice by Sonoma County residents.

## **2.6 Variety and Choice in Residential Environments**

**Issues:** Types of housing choices include location (urban vs. rural), structure types (single-family vs. multi-family units, conventional stick-built construction vs. manufactured housing), and tenure (ownership vs. rental). Issues include: the current range of choices available to consumers, factors which constrain or increase consumer choice, and the extent to which County policy may expand the range of housing choices without hindering the attainment of land-use, resource conservation and housing quality objectives.

**Goal 13: Choice of Residential Location.** It is the goal of the County of Sonoma to assure tht housing opportunities are provided in a variety of urban and rural settings -- with rural residential development limited to areas where there are no conflicts with maintenance of public health and safety or with conservation of agricultural, environmental, open space or other natural resources.

**Goal 14: Choice of Residential Structure Types.** It is the County's goal that the housing stock provide a wide range of consumer choice among structure types and construction techniques.

**Goal 15: Choice of Residential Tenure.** It is the County's goal that the housing stock accommodate the needs of consumers in both the ownership and rental sectors, with emphasis on expanding rental housing opportunities.

## **3.0 ASSURING AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY AND APPROPRIATE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF NEW HOUSING**

### **3.1 Housing Supply Needs**

Housing supply needs for unincorporated areas of the county through year-2005 are shown in Table 3.1; they are based on projections of household growth presented in the general land-use element.

#### **3.1.1 RESERVED**

#### **3.1.2 1990-2005 Housing Needs**

Between April 1, 1990 and April 1, 2005, an additional 10,243 housing units will be required to accommodate projected growth in the number of households expected to reside in unincorporated areas.



### 3.2 Constraints and Opportunities for New Housing Production

Accommodation of total housing production needs for the 1990-2005 period would require construction of new units at the rate of 683 per year, about the same as the 1980-84 rate of 675 units per year. If this level of housing production is to be achieved, an adequate supply of vacant sites with access to necessary public services is essential. The land-use policies of the County and public services policies of the County and special districts are principal constraints on the number, location and development potential of available housing sites, although these policies often reflect environmental factors that preclude development, or other public objectives such as preservation of agricultural, open space or scenic resources. Market factors, including land prices, interest rates, and landowner investment objectives and preferences regarding the scale and timing of development also significantly affect the rate and location of housing production. The wide fluctuations in the rate of homebuilding during recent years reflect the strong influence of these market factors.

#### 3.2.1 Supply and Distribution of Sites for New Housing in Unincorporated Areas

A survey conducted to identify the location, number and development potential of sites suitable for new housing under existing plans and zoning classified these sites in one of three categories:

**Urban sites** are parcels located within the existing boundaries of water and/or sewer service areas which are authorized densities on one or more dwelling unit per acre. In some areas, primarily those for which a specific plan has not been adopted in recent years, the survey excluded vacant parcels smaller than two acres. The data, therefore, underestimate the number of dwellings that may potentially be constructed on sites classified as urban. The data also exclude the majority of lands within the expansion areas of the eight cities, although these lands are commonly designated for development by the County's land-use plans. The number of potential units on vacant urban sites is estimated as the product of a site's acreage and its density (measured in units per acre) as authorized by the applicable specific plan or zoning. "Redevelopment potential" is an estimate of the number of housing units that could be constructed, based upon densities authorized by current land use plans or zoning, on existing parcels of two acres or more which presently have only one or two dwellings.

**Rural sites** are defined as accessible existing parcels, located outside urban service areas, where current land-use plan and zoning designations permit construction of one or more residences. Land-use regulations usually require 1 1/2 acres or more per dwelling, except in areas with a water distribution system where densities as great as one unit per acre may be authorized. Due to limitations on the availability of data, residential development potential is estimated in only a few rural areas, based upon several recently adopted specific plans. In the majority of the rural areas, data from the Assessor's parcel files are used to identify existing vacant parcels with zoning which authorizes residential use. However, development potential in terms of number of units or lots could not be estimated since densities authorized by the zoning are not known. In addition, sites within agricultural or timberland production zoning districts were excluded, although these zonings authorize some residential use. The residential development potential, therefore, in rural areas exceeds by an unknown (but probably sizeable) factor the number of existing vacant parcels identified by the survey.

**Other sites** are accessible, vacant, existing parcels, as identified through property tax assessment records, which cannot be classified based upon available information in either the urban or rural category. It is probable, however, that most of these sites are outside the boundaries of urban service areas.

**Supply of Available Urban Sites for Residential Development.** The survey data indicating available residential building sites and new dwelling unit potential in urban service areas are summarized in Table 3.2. The limitations of the data, briefly identified above, indicate that caution must be exercised in drawing and interpreting conclusions. Countywide, over 2,900 available vacant urban sites with a development potential of about 9,950 new units were identified. An additional 100 or more urban sites with a redevelopment potential of 1,659 units increase the total new dwelling unit potential within the existing boundaries of urban service areas to about 11,600 units. Again, it should be noted that this total does not include potential new dwelling units on vacant



TABLE 3.1 HOUSING PRODUCTION NEEDS, 1990-2005, AND PROJECTED TOTAL HOUSING UNITS, 2005, BY PLANNING AREA AND CITY

Planning Area/City	1990 Existing Units			1990-2005 Housing Production Needs		2005 Total Housing Units
	<u>Yr.-Rnd.</u>	<u>Seasonal</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Yr.-Rnd.</u>	<u>Seasonal</u>	
Sonoma Coast	3,165	1,520	4,685	579	830	6,094
Cloverdale	3,951	180	4,131	1,642	15	5,788
City of Cloverdale	2,216	47	2,263	945	0	3,529
Uninc. Area	1,735	133	1,868	697	15	2,259
Healdsburg	11,617	340	11,957	5,982	0	17,939
City of Healdsburg	3,934	57	3,991	2,283	0	6,274
Uninc. Area	7,683	283	7,966	3,699	0	11,665
Russian River	6,024	2,600	8,624	1,156	-100	9,680
Santa Rosa	65,693	920	66,613	15,002	30	81,645
City of Santa Rosa	49,605	540	50,145	13,827	0	71,405
Uninc. Area	16,088	380	16,468	1,175	30	10,240
Sebastopol	9,727	300	10,027	1,670	0	11,697
City of Sebastopol	3,112	31	3,143	1,318	0	4,576
Uninc. Area	6,615	269	6,884	352	0	7,121
Rohnert Pk. - Cotati	16,050	120	16,170	5,586	0	21,756
City of Rohnert Pk.	12,101	74	12,175	4,185	0	16,360
City of Cotati	1,962	14	1,976	818	0	2,895
Uninc. Area	1,987	32	2,019	583	0	2,501
Petaluma	19,938	220	20,158	6,287	0	26,445
City of Petaluma	16,562	137	16,699	5,485	0	22,585
Uninc. Area	3,376	83	3,459	802	0	3,860
Sonoma Valley	15,277	670	15,947	2,771	30	18,748
City of Sonoma	3,907	72	3,979	1,571	0	5,692
Uninc. Area	11,370	598	11,968	1,200	30	13,056
County Totals	151,442	6,870	158,312	40,675	805	199,792
All Cities	93,399	972	94,371	30,432	0	133,316
Uninc. Areas	58,043	5,898	63,941	10,243	805	66,476

- Notes: (1) Sources for 1990 data are the 1990 Assessor's Tax Roll (total units) and the 1980 Census (seasonal units).
- (2) Total units in 2005 equal to 1990 units plus 1990-2005 housing production needs, plus or minus adjustments for the 8,500 units projected to be annexed over the 1990-2005 period
- (3) Total 2005 units in the Russian River area incorporates the projected conversion of 100 seasonal units to year-round occupancy over the 1990-2005 period.

parcels smaller than two acres in several of the urban service areas (nor does it include units which could be built as a result of approvals of density bonuses or "secondary units"). For a more detailed presentation and explanation of information from the housing site inventory, refer to the technical supplement to this element.

TABLE 3.2: AVAILABLE SITES FOR NEW HOUSING, IN UNINCORPORATED URBAN SERVICE AREAS: 1984

Permitted Development Density	<u>Vacant Land</u>		<u>Land With Redevelopment Potential</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	Sites	Potential Units	Sites	Potential Units	Sites	Potential Units
1-6 units/acre	691	4,539	82+	1,000	773+	5,539
1-8 units/acre	2197	2,517	NA	NA	2,197	2,517
7+ units/acre	21+	2,888	18	659	39+	3,547
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,909+</b>	<b>9,944</b>	<b>100+</b>	<b>1,659</b>	<b>3,000+</b>	<b>11,603</b>

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department

**Available Rural Sites and Residential Development Potential.** Assessor's parcel records identify over 1,300 vacant sites for new residential construction in rural areas and about 10,800 additional vacant sites that could not be classified as urban or rural (but which are probably mostly rural). It should be reiterated that the total number of rural sites (12,127) does not include parcels with agricultural or timberland production zoning, although they are frequently authorized some residential development potential by plans and zoning. Additional data from several recently adopted specific plans covering rural areas indicates a development potential of 10,174 additional residential units (ie. building sites), based on land divisions consistent with plan land-use designations and zonings. Total rural development potential, including existing vacant parcels and possible new parcels, is about 22,300 units. As noted in Table 3.1, projected demand for new units in unincorporated areas is at 17,292 for the 1980-2005 period. Thus it is clear that rural parcels available for development far exceed projected demand.

**Adequacy of Supply at Available Residential Building Sites.** The sum of the existing vacant rural (including "other") parcels and the additional development potential computed for urban service areas and selected rural areas provides an approximation of the number of housing units that could be constructed on the surveyed lands. This total, about 33,900 dwellings, excludes development potential in areas of the County for which recent specific plans have not been adopted as well as the existing vacant agriculturally-zoned parcels. It is clear, therefore, that the County's existing land-use policies would accommodate many more dwelling units than are projected to be needed through year 2005. Total projected needs -- about 14,590 units from 1984 to 2005 -- could be accommodated without any further subdivision of rural land.

The distribution of available residential building sites by planning area is shown in Table 3.3. These data should be interpreted with caution, especially in the Cloverdale, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Sonoma Valley planning areas have large portions of their rural land area zoned as agricultural -- zonings which are not included in the tabulated sites, although residential uses are permitted. Except for Petaluma, the incorporated portion of each of the planning areas has one or more urban service districts. As noted above, residential development potential within the existing boundaries of these districts was about 11,600 units.

### 3.2.2 Adequacy of Urban Public Services

Available sites for new housing which are located within urban service areas cannot be developed without adequate water, sewage collection and treatment and other public services. Clean, affordable and

**Table 3.3 AVAILABLE SITES FOR NEW HOUSING IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF SONOMA COUNTY: 1984**

Unincorp. Plng. Area (PA)/ Urban Service Area	Urban Service Areas (1)				Rural Areas	
	Vacant Land		Redevelopment Land		Addtl. New Bldg. Sites(2)	Exist. Rural Sites(3)
	No. of Sites	Pot. Units	No. of Sites	Pot. Units		
P.A. 1						
Bod. Bay P.U.D.	698	1,018	NA	NA	---	---
Sea Ranch C.S.A.	1,499	1,499	0	0	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	NA	1,773
P. A. 2						
Geyserville C.S.A.	2	10	1	13	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	NA	395
P.A. 3						
Windsor C.W.D	NA	2,983	NA	NA	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	NA	967
P.A. 4						
Frstville C.S.D.	1	11	9	297	---	---
Rus. Rver C.S.D.	585	824	NA	NA	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	NA	1,752
P.A. 5						
A-L-W C.S.A.	30	2,281	NA	NA	---	---
So. Park C.S.D.	10	403	39	829	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	5,479	2,959
P. A. 6						
Graton C.S.D.	1	4	10	53	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	200	1,205
P. A. 7						
Pengrv C.S.A	48	289	NA	NA	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	NA	307
P. A. 8						
Rural	---	---	---	---	1,840	644
Sonoma Valley						
Son. Villy.C.S.D.	35	622	41	467	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	2,655	2,125
Total						
Urban Service						
Areas	2,909+	9,944	100	1,659	---	---
Rural	---	---	---	---	10,174	12,127

Notes: (1) (2) (3) for these sources, see previous Housing Element text



adequate water distribution systems are a prerequisite for additional residential development within these areas. The current status of these services in unincorporated urban service areas is summarized in the following paragraphs.

**Water Services** The two principal sources of drinking water in Sonoma County are the Russian River and wells owned by water companies or individuals. All urban service areas of the county except Windsor, Occidental, Geyserville, Graton, Bodega Bay and Sea Ranch receive Russian River water, with distribution administered by the Sonoma County Water Agency. The current Russian River entitlement of 98 million gallons per day (MGD) is sufficient to serve projected future demand through year 1990; the SCWA estimates that additional supply from the Warm Springs Reservoir will accommodate projected growth through the year 2017. Any future service problems should involve distribution rather than supply issues.

There are 206 water systems currently operating in the county; 177 of these serve fewer than 200 customers and are regulated by the County's Public Health Department, while 29 serve more than 200 customers and are regulated by the California Department of Public Health (DOH) and Public Utilities commission. Of the smaller systems, 25 are currently subject to moratoriums on new connections. Among the larger water systems serving unincorporated urban areas, only the Penngrove system has serious problems that may constrain the availability of water service for new development. This privately-owned system is subject to a DOH moratorium on new connections due to substandard water pressure and quality. Although recent improvements have resolved pressure problems in some areas, the entire system may require major renovation or replacement due to age and obsolescence. The County is participating in a feasibility study to identify options for the future ownership, improvement and operation of this system.

Although a number of small rural systems have problems related to the quality or quantity of water supply and adequacy of distribution facilities, those systems serving urban areas other than Penngrove have minimal supply or distribution problems that constrain new residential development. The costs of needed storage and distribution facilities are primarily financed by connection fees, which in 1984 ranged from zero in Larkfield and Geyserville to \$2,065/unit in Forestville. Where Sonoma County Water Agency is not available, the adequacy of water distribution systems should be considered in siting new housing.

**Sewage Collection, Treatment, and Disposal Services.** Twelve sanitation districts administered by five administrative entities provide sewer services in unincorporated urban areas of the county. The principal indicator of a system's ability to serve growth is the percentage of dry weather capacity required to serve existing development. When total daily dry weather flows exceed 75 percent of dry weather design capacity, the operator is required to notify the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and prepare a plan for serving projected growth without exceeding the 75 percent criterion. Such notifications are also required if a system releases untreated wastewater, or if the quality of treated effluent falls below prescribed standards. The purpose of the 75 percent notification requirement is to provide sufficient "lead time" for the planning and construction of new facilities. In Sonoma County,, only one system has filed such a notification (Wikiup, currently operating at 89 percent of capacity), although the Windsor Water District and Sonoma Valley Sanitation District are operating at close to 75 percent of capacity. In all other systems, at least 25 percent of dry weather design capacity remains to serve short-term growth. It is the County's intent to develop a reliable mechanism to monitor dry weather capacity and ensure adequate holding and disposal areas to prevent environmental and economic damage when accommodating new growth.

The overall ability of districts serving unincorporated urban areas to finance facilities to accommodate growth has been greatly influenced by the availability of federal funding. The Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 provided such funding, but limited consideration of future service needs to a ten year period. Most Clean Water funds were disbursed in the 1970's, and in Sonoma County the last of the Clean Water funds are currently being used to upgrade facilities in the Occidental CSD and to help construct a new treatment plant serving the Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup area. Unless new federal or state programs provide financing, future expansions of existing facilities will have to be funded at the local level through bond issues, assessment districts, connection fees, or some combination of these methods. The increased reliance on local resources is demonstrated by connection

fees, which in 1984 ranged from \$1,500/unit in the Russian River CSD to \$4,800/unit in those portions of CSA 31 (Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup) not included in Assessment District #1.

**Education Services.** Availability of funds for construction and operation of public school facilities is difficult to assess, due to uncertainties regarding future revenues from property taxes and state and federal budgets. California law (Government Code, Section 65970 et. seq.) assists school districts severely affected by rapid growth by allowing local governments to require the dedication of land or the payment of impact fees by developers of residential units. However, the land or fees may only be used to provide interim facilities for a maximum period of five years. In 1984, seven of the 48 school districts in the county used this provision of state law to collect impact fees ranging from \$660 to \$1270 per unit.

### **3.3 Housing Supply, Location and Geographic Distribution: County Objectives and Policies**

The total need for new housing units in unincorporated areas of the county over the six-year period from April 1, 1984 to April 1, 1990 is 2,885 units. A small portion of total need - estimated at 104 units - could be satisfied by conversion of seasonal units to year-round occupancy. These opportunities are reflected in county objectives.

#### **Objective 3A: Supply of New Housing Units Addresses Goal(s): 1 and 2**

It is the County's objective to encourage construction of 2,885 new housing units in unincorporated portions of Sonoma County between April 1, 1984 and March 31, 1990.

##### **Policy 3A1: Provisions of Adequate Public Services Program Reference(s): 1-5 and 7**

It is the County's policy to support and require the provision of public services where appropriate within designated urban service areas at levels adequate to meet the needs of existing households and accommodate projected new households. Since the need for such infrastructure far exceeds the County's available financial resources, it is the County's policy to require fair-share contributions from new development.

##### **Policy 3A2: Funding of Public Services Program Reference(s): 1-4, 10**

Within designated urban service areas, it is the County's policy to finance improvements of public facilities and services needed to accommodate the projected residential growth using any available federal or state programs, connection fees, benefit assessment districts, revenue bonds, or a combination of the above. In choosing among financing alternatives, it is the County's policy to select measures that minimize, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts on housing costs, particularly those of existing low- and moderate-income residents.

##### **Policy 3A3: Financial Assistance to Stimulate New Housing Production Program Reference(s): 6, 13-17, 20-21, 29**

It is the policy of the County to use available federal and state funding programs to provide financial assistance for the purpose of promoting production of new housing for low- and moderate-income sectors of the market for which builders and developers would not find new construction feasible without assistance.

#### **Objective 3B: Geographic Distribution of New Construction Addresses Goal(s): 2**

It is the County's objective to encourage the distribution of new residential construction among the nine planning areas in a manner that reflects the projected distribution of employment opportunities and new households, as shown in Table 3-1.



**Objective 3C: Emphasis on Residential Development Within Urban Service Areas Addresses Goal(s): 2 and 3**

It is the County of Sonoma's objective that the majority of new units to be constructed in unincorporated areas by 1990 be located within urban service areas where water and sewer services are available.

**Policy 3C1: Priority Areas for Urban Residential Development Program Reference(s): 1-5**

In its specific plan program and in considering rezoning requests, it is the County's policy to encourage "infill" development of vacant and underutilized land within existing urban service areas before authorizing expansions of the boundaries of such areas. Where expansion of an existing urban service area appears appropriate, in order to accommodate projected growth, the location, scale and potential environmental effects of the expansion shall be assessed within the context of the applicable specific plan.

**Policy 3C2: Residential Use Policy in Resource Areas Program Reference(s): 1-3**

It is the policy of the County that lands located within the resource-related land-use categories of the land-use element -- including undeveloped, general agriculture, orchards and vineyards, and agriculture and residential - shall not be authorized additional residential use by specific plans and zonings, except as such new residences are ancillary to and supportive of the resource use.

**Policy 3C3: Rural Residential Use Policy Program Reference(s): 1-3**

It is the policy of Sonoma County that the major share of nonurban residential development in unincorporated areas be authorized on lands which are designated within the "rural residential" category by the land-use element. Densities authorized by the land-use element may range from one unit per acre to one unit per five acres for these lands. It is the County's policy that the land area designated for rural residential use not be expanded by General or Specific plan amendments, specific plans or rezonings, but that future growth be accommodated through build-out on lands already designated for this use.

**4.0 HOUSING COSTS: INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS**

For low-and moderate-income households, high housing prices and rents frequently mean that they must pay such a large share of their budget for housing that many other necessities must be sacrificed. The only alternative in many cases may be occupancy of deteriorated and sub-standard housing or in extreme situations no housing at all. Adequate, safe, and healthful shelter is an important aspect of the physical and emotional well-being of low-and moderate-income individuals and families, just as it is for those of greater means. It is in the interest of the County of Sonoma that households with insufficient incomes not suffer either housing deprivation or loss of other necessities. In meeting this basic need, the County will seek to expand the quantity of housing units that are available at prices and rents affordable to those with low or moderate income. Such housing may be provided through new construction and especially from the stock of existing older dwellings. The County will also provide financial assistance to low- and moderate-income households to offset a portion of their housing expense, to the extent that funds for this purpose are available from state and federal sources.

**4.1 The Affordable Housing Problem**

For purposes of the Housing Element, the following definitions shall be used in estimating the extent of the need for housing with prices or rents affordable to low- and moderate-income households and in assessing proposals for constructing or providing affordable housing:



Income Levels. Four levels, based on guidelines used by state and federal agencies, are employed:

<u>Household Income Category</u>	<u>Percent of County Median Household Income</u>
Very Low	Less than 50%
Low (or Lower)	Less than 80%
Moderate	80% to 120%
Low and Moderate	Less than 120%
Above Moderate	More than 120%

Household Income - The sum of all monetary income received regularly by all household members over 15 years of age, including wages, salaries, self-employment income, farm income, social security and pension income, interest and dividends, prior to tax and other deductions. In any particular year, median household incomes for each household size category shall be considered to be the same as that specified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD).

Housing Costs (for owners) - mortgage principal and interest, property taxes, insurance and utilities (electricity, gas and water).

Housing Costs (for renters) - gross rent, which includes "contract" rent (ie. the nominal rent agreed to by tenant and landlord) and utilities (electricity, gas and water).

Excessive Housing Costs - housing costs that exceed 30 percent of the income of low- and moderate-income households.

These income and housing-cost definitions are compatible with those of the Bureau of the Census, ensuring that housing cost and income relationships can be evaluated with each new Census. The housing costs definition for renters assumes that mortgage costs, taxes and insurance are components of contract rent. Maintenance costs, which are a component of contract rent, are excluded from the definition of owner costs.

Based on these definitions and using countywide median household income data for 1979 (\$17,734) for the Census and 1984 (\$28,400) from DHUD, the following affordable mortgage payment/rent schedule can be computed:

<u>Income Level</u>	<u>Annual Income</u>		<u>Monthly Payment/Rent</u>	
	<u>1979</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1984</u>
Very Low	Less than \$ 8,867	\$14,150	Less than \$222	\$354
Lower	Less than \$14,147	\$22,720	Less than \$355	\$568
Moderate	Less than \$21,281	\$34,080	Less than \$532	\$852
Above Moderate	More than \$21,281	\$34,080	More than \$532	\$852

Most local, state, and federal housing programs refine the above schedule by adjusting affordable payments/rents by household size. However, since the Bureau of the Census suppresses some data for confidentiality reasons, the simplified definitions presented above are employed for analytical purposes in this element (they reflect income thresholds for a family of four). Their analytical use herein is not intended to supercede the more detailed criteria of local, state or federal programs.

#### 4.1.1 Needs for New Affordable Housing Units: 1984-1990

Table 4.1 shows the projected number of housing units needed at affordable price and rent levels to accommodate projected household growth between 1980 and 1990. The distribution of new households by income level has been estimated by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG); the net need for new

housing units affordable to low- and moderate-income households is determined by deducting affordable housing units constructed between April 1, 1980 and March 31, 1984. This procedure assumes that the shelter needs of new households with insufficient incomes will be accommodated through occupancy of new units; however, most such households are likely to obtain their housing services from the stock of existing less-expensive units.

Undoubtedly, a portion of the uncounted units constructed between 1980 and 1984 were affordable for moderate, or even low income households. Since no data are available to determine costs or rents for these units, Table 4.1 should be viewed as a very high estimate of 1984-90 projected potential need for new affordable units.

#### 4.1.2 Housing Affordability Problems of Existing Households, 1980

Table 4.2 presents Census data which estimate the number and percentage of households at each income level that paid over 30 percent of their annual income for housing in 1980. Information is presented separately for owner and renter households, and for the cities and unincorporated areas of the county. These data are subject to three qualifications:

- 1) Data shown are for "specified" owner- and renter- occupied units only. As defined by the Census, specified units exclude dwellings on parcels of 10 or more acres. Since there were 94,747 "specified" renter and owner households countywide in 1980, this means that data for 19,727 households (17.2 percent of 114,474 total households) are not reflected in Table 4.2.
- 2) Data for "specified" owner-occupied housing exclude households living in condominiums.
- 3) Income levels are based on family of four.

**Ownership Sector.** Slightly more than one-third of all low- and moderate-income homeowners residing in unincorporated areas paid more than 30 percent of their incomes for housing expenses in 1980, as shown in Table 4-2. Nearly twelve percent of homeowner households with above-moderate incomes also had excessive housing expenditures relative to their incomes. The number of over-paying low- and moderate-income owner households was nearly 4,000 in 1980. As could be expected, those households in the very low-income category were more likely to expend an excessive share of their income for housing than were households in the other income categories; nearly one-half of the "very low" income households had excessive expenditure-to-income ratios while just over one-fourth of the moderate-income owners experienced this problem. The low-and moderate-income homeowner households residing in the county's eight cities experience the problem of excessive housing costs at about the same frequency as do households with similar incomes in the unincorporated area. It is likely that many very low- and lower-income households pay a portion of homeowner costs from their accumulated savings rather than from current income.

**Renter Sector.** In 1980, almost 5,700 low- and moderate-income renter households residing in unincorporated areas paid rents which exceeded 30 percent of their income -- more than one-half of all such households. A greater share (50.7%) of low- and moderate-income renters had excessive housing costs than did low- and moderate-income homeowners (35.1%). Among very low-income renters, more than seven out of every ten households experienced excessive costs, while very few (2.6%) households with above-moderate incomes suffered this problem. Low- and moderate-income renters residing in the county's eight cities were more likely to have excessive housing costs than were similar households in the unincorporated area (58.2% and 50.7% respectively). This difference is accounted for by a greater quantity of low rent units in some less-accessible rural areas. The problem of excessive housing costs is especially acute for very low and lower-income renters, regardless of location, since they frequently have not accumulated any savings and are vulnerable to rent increases.

**Total Unmet Need: 1980.** The total number of low- and moderate-income households living in unincorporated areas and having housing affordability problems in 1980 was 9,646 or about 42.8 percent of all such households. About six out of every ten households with this problem were renters. The problem of excessive housing expenditures was especially severe for very low-income households and affected about 60.5 per cent of these



**Table 4.1 NET NEED FOR AFFORDABLE LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSING UNITS  
IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF SONOMA COUNTY: 1984-1990  
(HIGH ESTIMATE)**

		(HIGH ESTIMATE)			
		INCOME LEVEL (2)			
UNINCORPORATED		Very			
AREA (1)		Low	Lower	Moderate	Total (%) (3)
Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin					
Total Need:	1980-90	143	99	115	357 ( 9.8)
Construction:	1980-84 (4)	9 (5)	9 (5)	0	18 ( 0.5)
Net Need:	1984-90	134	90	115	339 ( 9.3)
Cloverdale/N.E. County					
Total Need:	1980-90	61	42	49	152 ( 4.2)
Construction:	1980-84	0	0	0	0 ( 0.0)
Net Need:	1984-90	61	42	49	152 ( 4.2)
Healdsburg Environs					
Total Need:	1980-90	460	318	372	1,150 ( 31.7)
Construction:	1980-84	3	58	2	63 ( 1.7)
Net Need:	1984-90	457	260	370	1,087 ( 30.0)
Russian River					
Total Need:	1980-90	125	86	101	312 ( 8.6)
Construction:	1980-84	0	0	0	0 ( 0.0)
Net Need:	1984-90	125	86	101	312 ( 8.6)
Santa Rosa Environs					
Total Need:	1980-90	245	170	198	611 ( 16.8)
Construction:	1980-84	40 (5)	40 (5)	17	97 ( 2.7)
Net Need:	1984-90	205	130	181	514 ( 14.1)
Sebastopol Environs					
Total Need:	1980-90	52	36	42	130 ( 3.6)
Construction:	1980-84	2	10	0	12 ( 0.3)
Net Need:	1984-90	50	26	42	118 ( 3.3)
Rohnert Park/Cotati Environs					
Total Need:	1980-90	54	37	44	135 ( 3.7)
Construction:	1980-84	0	0	0	0 ( 0.0)
Net Need:	1984-90	54	37	44	135 ( 3.7)
Petaluma Environs					
Total Need:	1980-90	82	57	66	205 ( 5.7)
Construction:	1980-84	0	0	0	0 ( 0.0)
Net Need:	1984-90	82	57	66	205 ( 5.7)
Sonoma Valley					
Total Need:	1980-90	230	160	186	576 ( 15.9)
Construction:	1980-84	2	34	24	60 ( 1.7)
Net Need:	1984-90	228	126	162	516 ( 14.2)
COUNTY TOTALS					
Total Need:	1980-90	1,452	1,005	1,173	3,630 (100.0)
Construction:	1980-84	56	151	43	250 ( 6.9)
Net Need:	1984-90	1,396	854	1,130	3,380 ( 93.1)

Notes: (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) for these sources, see previous Housing Element text.



**Table 4.2 HOUSEHOLDS WITH EXCESSIVE HOUSING EXPENDITURES RELATIVE TO INCOME, CITIES AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF SONOMA COUNTY, 1980**

Area/Income Category	Number of Households:			Percent of Dwellers in Income Category:	
	Renter	Owner	All	Renter	Owner
<u>Unincorporated Areas:</u>					
Low and Moderate:	5,675	3,971	9,646	50.7	35.1
Very Low	3,665	1,774	5,439	70.5	46.8
Lower	1,532	1,023	2,555	47.1	32.8
Moderate	478	1,174	1,652	17.5	26.6
Above Moderate	76	1,393	1,469	2.6	11.5
Total: All Incomes	5,751	5,364	11,115	40.9	22.9
<u>Cities:</u>					
Low and Moderate:	11,242	4,835	16,077	58.2	36.0
Very Low	7,076	2,000	9,076	81.3	47.8
Lower	3,038	1,241	4,279	55.6	36.0
Moderate	1,128	1,594	2,722	21.9	27.4
Above Moderate	126	2,081	2,207	2.2	11.1
Total All Incomes	11,368	6,916	18,284	45.2	21.5
	Percent Households in Income Category:				
	Renter	Owner	All		
<u>Unincorporated Areas:</u>					
Low and Moderate:	25.2	17.6	42.8		
Very Low	40.8	19.7	60.5		
Lower	24.0	16.1	40.1		
Moderate	6.7	16.4	23.1		
Above Moderate	0.5	9.4	9.9		
Total All Incomes	15.3	14.3	29.6		
<u>Cities:</u>					
Low and Moderate:	34.3	14.8	49.1		
Very Low	54.9	15.5	70.4		
Lower	34.1	13.9	48.0		
Moderate	10.3	14.5	24.8		
Above Moderate	0.5	8.5	9.0		
Total All Incomes	19.8	12.1	31.9		

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department, based upon tabulations of data from STF 3A, Bureau of the Census

households. A somewhat higher share (49.1%) of low- and moderate-income households residing in the eight cities experienced excessive housing costs than did comparable households in the unincorporated area (42.8%).

## 4.2 Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing: Constraints and Opportunities

There are two basic approaches towards resolving the problem of low- and moderate-income households which pay an excessive share of their income for housing. First, efforts may be addressed to reducing the costs to housing suppliers of providing housing services. These efforts may focus on reduction of costs of constructing new dwellings and/or reduction in the costs of providing housing services from the existing stock. Although some cost-reduction measures may benefit housing producers or households with above-moderate incomes, the usual practice is to require that any governmentally-assisted cost-reductions be passed along to low- and moderate-income housing consumers. This may be accomplished by designing policies and programs which

require a housing supplier to market all, or a portion of, the units in an assisted project to low- and moderate-income households at prices or rents which will not result in their having excessive housing expenditure: income ratios. The second basic approach is to provide financial assistance to low- and moderate-income households in order to pay a portion of their monthly housing costs. The effect is to reduce the housing expenditures that are required from the household's own budget. This section examines the various components of housing production costs in order to assess the extent to which potential governmental programs may contribute to cost reductions.

### 4.2.1 The Costs of Producing Housing

**The Costs of New Construction.** Table 4.3 shows production costs per unit in 1984 for a 1200 square foot detached single-family unit and a 900 square foot condominium in a multi-unit structure, both in 20-unit subdivisions. The cost estimates assume:

- a site in the unincorporated area which has urban services;
- a relatively level building site with no extraordinary development constraints;
- existing zoning that permits the indicated density; and no requirement for an environmental impact report.

These project prototypes are intended to reflect costs being paid in 1984 by residential developers. Land costs are an estimated average for unincorporated urban service areas based on a survey of local relators; site improvement and construction costs are based on cost data from recent local projects. The housing prototypes reflect basic rather than luxury units, with sizes somewhat smaller those currently being produced by the market, and minimal amenities. Local fees are expressed as ranges so as to reflect the variation in development fees currently found in unincorporated urban areas of the county. These ranges are carried through in construction financing, profit/overhead and marketing costs.

The range of sales prices per dwelling unit is intended to show:

- the minimum price per unit in the lowest fee areas of the county; and
- the minimum price per unit in the highest fee areas of the county.

The minimum and maximum sales prices shown in Table 4.3 must be interpreted with caution and are intended to be illustrative; actual costs for specific projects will vary.

### The Costs of Owning and Renting Existing Units

**Sales Price Trends: Ownership Sector.** Census data indicate that the median value of owner-occupied units in 1980 was \$88,400. This was an increase of 339 percent over the 1970 median of \$20,100, for an effective annual appreciation rate of nearly 16 percent. Data from the Sonoma County Multiple Listing Service (MLS) indicate that the mean price of all units should countywide in April 1980 was \$88,100, a figure that corresponds almost exactly with Census data on unit value. In April 1984, the MLS reported a countywide mean sales price of \$120,300, an increase of 36.6 percent over the 1980 mean. Monthly payments would range from \$1,180-1,430

**Table 4.3 ILLUSTRATIVE PER UNIT PRODUCTION COSTS FOR 20 UNIT SUBDIVISION,  
1984 IN 1984 DOLLARS**

	Detached 1200 Sq. Ft.		900 Sq. Ft.	
	<u>Single Family</u> (%)		<u>Condominium</u> (%)	
LAND COST:	\$12,500(2)	(14.4-13.7)	\$ 9,375(3)	(14.2-13.4)
DIRECT CONSTRUCTION COSTS:				
Site Improvements (4)	\$14,400	(16.5-15.8)	\$ 9,000	(13.7-12.8)
Unit Construction (5)	33,600	(38.6-36.8)	25,000	(38.3-35.9)
Subtotal:	\$48,000	(55.1-52.6)	\$34,200	(52.0-48.7)
INDIRECT COSTS:				
Design	\$ 600	(0.7)	\$ 1,800	(2.7-2.5)
Local Fees (6)	3,635-6,855	(4.2-7.5)	3,495-6,715	(5.3-9.6)
Subtotal:	4,235-7,455	(4.9-8.2)	5,295-8,515	(8.0-12.1)
FINANCING COSTS:(7)				
Points and Fees	3,010-3125	(3.5-3.4)	2,400-2,530	(2.7-3.6)
Interest	4,130-4,335	(4.7-4.8)	3,115-3,325	(4.7-4.7)
Subtotal:	7,140-7,460	(8.2-8.2)	5,515-5,855	(8.4-8.3)
Subtotal:	\$71,875-75,415	(82.6)	\$54,385-57,945	(82.6)
PROFIT AND OVERHEAD (8)	\$10,780-11,310	(12.4)	8,160-8,690	(12.4)
MARKETING (9)	4,350-4,565	(5.0)	3,290-3,505	(5.0)
SALES PRICE	\$87,005-91,290	(100.0)	\$65,835-70,140	(100.0)

**NOTES:**

(1) Percent of sales price; all numbers rounded

(2) 4.0 acres R1 Zoning, developed at 5 units/acre; sales price: \$62,500 acre.

(3) 1.66 acres R3 Zoning developed at 12 units/acre; sales price: \$112,500/acre

(4) Includes staking, soils engineering, grading, streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street signs, lights and trees, utility mains and laterals, fencing, landscaping and mailboxes.

(5) Labor and materials at \$28 per square foot.

(6) See Table 4.6

(7) At 13.75% plus 3 points; assumes 9-month development period

(8) AT 15% of land, direct, indirect and financing costs

(9) AT 5% of sales price



for a home with the average price, depending on the amount of downpayment and the type of financing used. The limited data that are available generally indicate a dramatic slowing of the rate of appreciation in the 1980s, compared to the previous decade.

Other MLS data indicate that the average sales price of homes in several areas of the county (including incorporated cities) declined somewhat between 1983 and 1984. Since the decreases occurred during a period when conventional mortgage interest rates were relatively stable at around 14 percent, they may be attributed to price-cutting intended to encourage sales.

Rent Trends: Rental Sector. In 1980, median countywide gross rent (including utilities) was \$289. Rent trends since 1980 have been identified in two surveys, conducted in 1982 and 1984 by the Santa Rosa Housing Authority and the Sonoma County Community Development Commission. The surveys consisted of a random sampling of 1,246 rental units (71 single-family units and 1,175 multi-family units) and included allocations for utility costs.

**TABLE 4.4: SONOMA COUNTY MEDIAN RENTS: 1982-84**

<u>Unit Size</u>	<u>Single-Family</u>			<u>Multi-Family</u>		
	<u>1982</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>
Studio	--	--	--	\$280	\$400	42.8%
1 Bedroom	--	\$375	--	\$290	\$420	44.8%
2 Bedroom	\$400	\$425	6.3%	\$350	\$440	25.7%
3 Bedroom	\$450	\$510	13.3%	\$425	\$565	32.9%
4 Bedroom	\$548	\$578	5.5%	--	--	--

Source: Santa Rosa Housing Authority and Sonoma County Community Development Commission.

Table 4.4 shows the results of the surveys; median rents for the various sizes of single-family units increased an average of 8.4 percent while median rents for multi-family units increased an average of 36.6 percent. The latter rate of increase exceeded the change in the Bay Area Consumer Price Index (+10.85%) over the same period. A follow-up newspaper survey by the Planning Department in 1984 indicated that a high proportion (91.6%) of the units affordable for very low-income households were studio and one-bedroom units, indicating that very low-income households of more than two persons have substantial difficulty in finding affordable housing without overcrowding. This trend was less pronounced for very low- and moderate-income households, for which about one-half of all rental units were affordable in 1984. These households also had more choice in terms of unit size, with studio and one bedroom units comprising 35.5 percent of the units affordable for the low-income group.

The disparity in rates of increase between single-family and multi-family units is also significant. Since units in the multi-unit and duplex categories in urban areas are more likely to be occupied by very low- and lower-income households, these income groups have probably been more adversely affected by recent rent increases than have moderate-income households. Timing of rent increases, as well as average annual rates, is important. The Sonoma County

Rental Information and Mediation Services (SCRIMS) has received reports of increases of as much as 100 percent with only the 30-day legal minimum notice to tenants. Although such increases typically occur after long periods of stable rents, or after sale of rental property, their impact on low- and moderate-income tenants can be severe. Impacts are intensified by high moving costs, which typically include any net loss on deposits from the current rental unit and payment of first and last month's rent plus deposits on the new unit in addition to the costs of moving household goods.

#### 4.2.2 Market Factors Influencing Housing Costs and Affordability

**Land Costs.** A 1984 survey by the Planning Department indicated that residential land prices ranged from \$50-75,000 per acre for unimproved urban sites zoned for development at five units/acre, \$90-120,000 for unimproved urban land zoned for development at 15 units per acre, and \$10-50,000 per acre for rural single-family home sites -- depending on zoning, location and amenities. Little data on price trends are available, but indications are that an improved 6,000 square foot lot appreciated in value from about \$6,000 in 1972 to \$30,000 in 1984 - yielding an effective annual appreciation rate of 14.4 percent. Table 4.3 shows that land costs comprise from 13.4 to 14.4 percent of the total cost of the urban housing prototype; in rural areas on a 1.5-acre site, land costs could account for as much as 45 percent of housing costs.

**Construction Costs.** These costs cover site improvements necessary to prepare a site for residential development as well as the actual costs of labor and materials for the dwelling. Over the past four years, site improvement costs in the Bay Area (as measured by Bank of America) have increased at 9.2 percent per year and unit construction costs have increased at 6.0 percent per year, compared to an increase of 6.8 percent per year in the Bay Area Consumer Price Index. Market opportunities for reducing these costs include:

**Manufactured housing.** If a mobile home, the predominant form of manufactured housing, were substituted for the minimum price single-family unit in Table 4.3, the sales price would be reduced about seven percent to \$81,550.

**"Downsizing".** If the minimum price units in Table 4.3 were reduced in size by 200 square feet, the price of the single-family unit could be reduced 8.6 percent to \$79,540, and the price of the condominium could be reduced 11.4 percent to \$58,315.

**Financing Costs.** Average interest rates for home mortgages, based on summary data collected by a local title company, have fluctuated considerably over the past five years. In January 1980, rates for a 30 year, fixed rate loan averaged 13.1 percent with a loan-to-value ratio of 0.0. Rates peaked at 18.2 percent in October 1981, but declined to 13.1 percent by April 1984. In the latter part of 1984, rates crept upwards to 14 percent for fixed rate loans and initial rates averaged 11.1 percent for adjustable rate (ARM) loans. Monthly payments resulting from prevailing rates in late 1984 (including impounds for taxes and insurance, but excluding utility costs) are shown in Table 4.5. All of these loans were available to qualifying households. Sales prices in the table are based on:

- the mean (average) sales price of all homes sold in Sonoma County in April 1984 (\$120,300 per MLS);
- the minimum sales price for a new 1200 square foot detailed single-family unit, from Table 4.3; and
- the minimum sales price for a 900 square foot condominium in a multi-unit structure from Table 4.3.

Table 4.5 shows that production costs and interest rates prevailing in 1984 excluded very low-income households from the market for new owner-occupied units. Disregarding the effect of lower construction financing rates on sales prices, mortgage rates would have had to fall to about four percent before the multi-unit condominium prototype would be affordable to these income levels. Given ARM financing, the single family unit was just within the affordability range of moderate-income households, although addition of an allocation for monthly utility bills would push total payments past the \$852 threshold for this income group. The average priced resale unit would not be affordable for any low- or moderate-income household, but undoubtedly a large proportion of the existing units would have resale prices below \$120,300 and could be affordable for moderate income homebuyers. The effects of high housing prices and mortgage interest rates are most severe for first time buyers, since any household with equity from the sale of a previous residence could use these funds to increase the downpayment and thereby lower monthly payments.



Table 4.5 ILLUSTRATIVE FINANCING COSTS

Detached Single Family House				
Sales Price	\$120,300		\$87,005	
	Down, Points & Closing Costs (2)	Monthly Payment (3)	Down, Points & Closing Costs (2)	Monthly Payment (3)
Fixed, Conventional (14% + 2 pts.)	\$15,995 (4)	\$1,430	\$12,015 (4)	\$1,045
FHA 203B, Fixed (14% + 1 pt.)	\$33,000 (5)	\$1,215	\$ 6,430 (6)	\$1,000
Adjustable Rate (11% + 2 pts.)	\$15,995 (4)	\$1,180	\$12,015 (4)	\$ 860
Multi-unit Condominium \$65,835				
	Down, Points & Closing Costs (2)	Monthly Payment (3)		
Fixed, Conventional (14% + 2 pts.)	\$ 9,070 (4)	\$ 780		
FHA 203B, Fixed (14% + 1 pt.)	\$ 4,720 (6)	\$ 825		
Adjustable Rate (11% + 2 pts.)	\$ 9,070 (4)	\$ 645		

## Notes:

- (1) All numbers rounded.
- (2) All closing costs based on 1984 FHA requirements.
- (3) Includes property tax and mortgage/hazard insurance impounds of \$149 for \$120,300 unit, \$115 for \$87,005 unit and \$80 for \$65,835 unit.
- (4) Assumes 10% down payment.
- (5) High down payment reflects FHA loan maximum of \$90,000. Impounds not required, but \$150 added to reflect actual costs for taxes and insurance.
- (6) FHA minimum down payment = 3% of first \$25,000, 5% of balance.



Table 4.6 THE IMPACT OF MORTGAGE INTEREST RATES ON MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME REQUIRED TO QUALIFY FOR A HOME MORTGAGE

Interest Rate	Monthly Payment	Income Required	Income Required as Percent of Median
Detached Single-Family House, \$120,300			
10%	\$ 1,100 (3)	\$44,000 (4)	155% (5)
12%	\$ 1,265 (3)	\$50,600 (4)	178% (5)
14%	\$ 1,430 (3)	\$57,200 (4)	201% (5)
16%	\$ 1,605 (3)	\$64,200 (4)	226% (5)
18%	\$ 1,780 (3)	\$71,200 (4)	251% (5)
Detached Single-Family House, \$87,005			
10%	\$ 800	\$32,000	113%
12%	\$ 920	\$36,800	130%
14%	\$ 1,045	\$41,800	147%
16%	\$ 1,170	\$46,800	165%
18%	\$ 1,295	\$51,800	182%
Condominium in Multi-Unit Structure, \$65,835			
10%	\$ 600	\$24,000	85%
12%	\$ 690	\$27,600	97%
14%	\$ 780	\$31,200	110%
16%	\$ 875	\$35,000	123%
18%	\$ 975	\$39,000	137%

## Notes:

(1) All numbers rounded

(2) Per Table 4.5

(3) Assumes 10 percent down payment; includes property tax and mortgage/hazard insurance impounds of \$149 for \$120,300 unit, \$115 for \$87,005 unit and \$80 for \$65,835 unit.

(4) Income required for monthly payments to equal 30% of gross household income.

(5) Based on 1984 countywide median income of \$28,400.

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department

The effects of interest rates on the level of income required to qualify for a home loan are illustrated in Table 4.6. For a house priced at about \$87,000, the monthly payments range from \$800 with a 10 percent mortgage loan to \$1,170 with a 16 percent loan (assuming a loan to value ratio of 0.9). In 1984, the monthly payment at 19 percent would require an annual income of \$32,000, 113% of the county's 1984 median household income; with an increase in interest rates to 12 percent, the home would no longer be considered "affordable", since an income higher than 120 percent of median income would be necessary to qualify for a home loan. For the \$87,000 home, each additional two percentage points on the mortgage interest rate necessitate an additional \$5,000 of household income in order to qualify for the loan. Short-term fluctuations in interest rates obviously have a substantial impact on the number of households that can afford to purchase new or existing housing.

**Market Factors and Residential Rents.** Since any housing unit can be rented, the preceding evaluations of land, construction and financing costs are also relevant to the rental sector. Renters are vulnerable to changing interest rates as well, since rental units can be refinanced or sold with little notice. Current residential rents reflect the sales price of a unit, plus the costs of financing, taxes, insurance maintenance, utilities, and other operating costs paid by the owner, as well as profit. These costs vary considerably for the existing rental stock, but there is a tendency in the market for rents on comparable units to fall within a relatively narrow range, regardless of costs. For example, residential rent survey data show that 60 percent of all two bedroom apartments advertised in April 1984 rented for \$425-550 per month.

The minimum rent which would be necessary in order to make construction of a new two-bedroom apartment feasible for investors has been estimated from data in Table 4.3 by preparing a discounted cash flow analysis for a five-year investment period, using the following assumptions:

- Minimum-price condominium unit in Table 4.3 downsized to 825 square feet resulting in a per unit acquisition cost of \$56,825 (assuming zero marketing costs), yielding an acquisition price of \$1,136,500 for a 20-unit project.
- Acquisition financed by a 30-year fixed-rate loan at 13 percent plus 3 points, a loan to value ratio of 0.7 and \$4,000 in closing costs; this results in an initial investment of \$369,135, and annual principal and interest payments of \$106,135.
- Realistic assumptions regarding annual expenses such as property taxes, insurance, maintenance and repair, utilities, and management costs; on the revenue side, rents were assumed to increase five percent annually, and an allowance was made for vacancies (five percent of gross rent).
- Liquidation of the investment at the end of the five-year period, with the project appreciating in value five percent annually.
- An investor in the 50 percent tax bracket who requires an after-tax return-on-investment of 18 percent.

These assumptions result in an initial monthly per unit rent of \$505, increasing to \$615 in the fifth year. This rent range meshes well with rent survey data for multi-unit apartments and duplex units. However, actual rents would be higher if the project is located in a desirable area, if operating costs are higher than assumed, or if the investor seeks a higher rate of return.

#### **4.2.3 Governmental Factors Influencing Housing Costs and Affordability**

**Residential Land-use and Density Policies.** County policies, reflected in general and specific plan land-use designations, determine the total supply of sites available for new housing and their development potential; these policies often reflect environmental constraints and public objectives other than affordable housing, especially in rural areas, such as conservation of agricultural, open space and scenic resources. Potential opportunities for reducing the impact of county land-use and density policies on housing costs include:

**Increasing the Total Supply of Housing Sites.** Increased supply could lower land prices if total demand (including speculative demand) holds constant or diminishes - an assumption not supported by recent trends. Since the current inventory of available sites exceeds the need for new housing units by a substantial margin, there is no reason to believe that designation of more sites for housing would have the effect of lowering land prices. It appears that prices in the land market result from a more complex set of circumstances than are reflected in a simple quantitative comparison of demand and supply for residential land.



**Development at Higher Densities.** Table 4.3 shows that land costs per dwelling are lower at higher densities, while Table 3.2 shows that existing plans and zoning provide a multi-family development potential of only 2,888 units on vacant sites in unincorporated areas.

**Second Unit Development.** Construction of secondary (or "granny") units under the County's second unit ordinance can reduce land costs per unit if the purchase price of a parcel does not reflect second unit development potential, and if second unit rents do not reflect the owner's land cost or market rents for comparable housing constructed as primary units.

**Subdivision Requirements.** The County's subdivision ordinance implements the state's Subdivision Map Act and establishes standards and procedures for the subdivision of real property in unincorporated areas of the county. Subdivision requirements have a major impact on site improvement costs, which comprised 12.8-16.5 percent of housing production costs in 1984 (See Table 4.3). Although subdivision requirements and associated costs constrain the production of affordable housing, they are a principal means of implementing General Plan policies regarding the protection of public health and safety and assuring the availability of adequate public services and facilities.

The subdivision ordinance contains, or incorporated by reference, many development standards which relate the broad requirements of state law to local conditions. Among the standards incorporated by reference are those of the zoning ordinance, which are addressed separately. Non-zoning standards include those of the state departments of Health, Forestry and Transportation, the Regional Water Quality control Board, the County departments of Public Health and Public Works, the County Water Agency, and local fire districts. Any reductions in standards of local origin to promote the production of affordable housing must be consistent with the state Subdivision Map Act and with the requirements of non-county governmental agencies, must be reviewed for consistency with policies of other General Plan elements, and must be evaluated for impacts on long-term public costs related to health, safety, and future demand for services and facilities.

Since the Subdivision Ordinance is to be revised within the next year, the feasibility of reductions in development standards should be evaluated within the context of the overall revision process. Specific standards for which reductions might be considered include, for example, street and sidewalk requirements. Sonoma County's current standards for streets and sidewalks in urban residential areas require a 50 foot right of way width, including 36 feet of paved street, two 5 foot sidewalks, and two 2 foot unpaved strips behind sidewalks. Data from a recent survey by the American Planning Association indicates that some jurisdictions have adopted right-of-way widths as narrow as 40 feet (34 feet for townhouse development), and have waived sidewalk requirements or required sidewalks only on one side of a street. These reduced standards are typically applied in planned communities, where off-street visitor parking is required. The County's subdivision ordinance currently allows such reductions upon petition by the developer to the Planning Commission.

**Zoning Regulations.** The County's zoning ordinance contains use and density regulations reflective of General and Specific Plan land-use designations. It also contains standards regulating yard areas, building heights, site coverage, open space and parking, and establishes areas where mobile home units are prohibited. These standards limit the extent to which a residential site may be developed, but are a principal means of ensuring adequate sunlight, open space (for health, energy and fire safety purposes) and parking for residential units. Uniformity of standards within residential zoning districts preserves the architectural character of neighborhoods and stabilizes property values.

The impact of zoning standards on per unit production costs is difficult to assess, since they incorporate requirements of building, fire and housing codes which would remain in effect in the absence of zoning. However, reductions in zoning standards consistent with those codes may assist developers in achieving the maximum density permitted on a given site, reducing per unit land costs. Reductions in parking standards may also reduce direct costs slightly, while removal of mobile home restrictions would substantially reduce direct costs in affected areas.



The County's zoning ordinance was in the process of being revised as of 1984. As with the subdivision ordinance, the revision process should evaluate the feasibility of reducing zoning standards that add unnecessarily to production costs; requirements governing yard area, building height, site coverage and parking in particular should be reviewed. A comparison of detailed data from the recent American Planning Association survey with current county standards indicate the following:

- Given the flexibility permitted by the County's planned development regulations and the PC district, most existing yard requirements reflect minimum standards found among surveyed jurisdictions. However, several jurisdictions have adopted a rear yard requirement of 15 feet in R1 districts.
- Current County standards reflect prevailing requirements related to maximum lot coverage by structures.
- In general, current County parking space requirements are less than those of surveyed jurisdictions. However, several jurisdictions are now linking parking space requirements to number of bedrooms, eliminating the negative impact of per unit requirements on small units. Others have reduced minimum parking space dimensions. The maximum percentage of compact spaces permitted in multi-family developments ranged from 25 to 60 percent; the current County maximum is 20 percent.

**Construction Codes.** A variety of construction codes (including building, mechanical, electrical, fire and housing codes) have been prepared by professional associations and adopted (usually with minor modifications) by the County. In addition, certain provisions of state law establish minimum standards for residential construction. Code requirements have a substantial effect on unit construction costs, but ensure the health, safety, curability and structural soundness of residential units.

Reductions in those construction codes which are not mandated by the state can reduce residential construction costs, but may increase long-term public and consumer costs if unit quality is substantially affected. In 1981, the County acted to reduce code requirements in rural areas through adoption of the "Class K" ordinance. This ordinance waives or modifies requirements of foundations, materials, mechanical and electrical equipment, and plumbing, provided the unit is owner-build and occupied, and located on a parcel of 20 or more acres. The reduced requirements undoubtedly may permit lower unit construction costs, but land costs resulting from the 20 acre minimum parcel size requirement mean that Class K housing is not affordable for most low- and moderate-income households.

Provisions of state law that affect housing production costs and which cannot be modified at the local level include two recent revisions of Title 24 of the Administrative Code:

- Revised energy conservation regulations establish conservation requirements for new residential structures (effective July, 1983).
- Revised accessibility regulations require that all ground-floor units in multi-family structures of 5 or more units be accessible to the physically handicapped (effective March, 1985).

The California Building Industry Association (CBIA) has estimated that revised energy conservation requirements will add \$1,500-2,000 to production costs per unit, while revised accessibility regulations will add \$500-600. Increased costs for energy conservation may increase initial sales prices and rents, but should reduce the utilities component of housing operating costs over the long term. Accessibility regulations will also increase initial sales prices and rents, but will address the housing needs of elderly and handicapped persons.

**Development Fees.** Table 4.7 shows that development fees can comprise as much as 92 percent of "indirect costs" and as much as 9.5 percent of total production costs for new residential units, and thus constitute a substantial constraint on the production of affordable housing. The development fee component of Table 4.3 include two types of fees:

**Service fees** are charged for specific public services, such as water and sewer connections, in defined geographical areas; they help defray the capital costs involved in expanding facilities and services to accommodate demand generated by new housing units.

**Permit fees** are charged throughout the unincorporated county and do not vary by geographical area; they partially defray the costs of processing development permits required by the County.

Table 4.7 shows current fee ranges in urban unincorporated areas; it indicates that service fees have a far more substantial impact on production costs than permit fees, accounting for 83.9 - 93.4% of all development fees. Connection fees are charged by all urban water and sewer districts and impact fees by seven school districts and by the County for road improvements in selected areas. The dollar amounts of sewer fees in 1984 ranged from \$600 per unit in the Geyserville C.S.D., to \$1,750 per unit in most other C.S.Ds., to a high of \$2,600 per unit in the Windsor Water District. Water connection fees in 1984 ranged from \$1,300 per unit in the Windsor Water District to \$1,900 per unit in the Southwest Santa Rosa (Roseland) area. School impact fees ranged from \$900 per unit in the Wright District to \$1,270 per unit in the Windsor Union District. Although detailed regional or statewide data are not available, these fee levels are comparable to those of districts in other urbanizing counties in California.

The need for service fees is the result of changes in local, state and federal funding mechanisms which have increased the dependence of local service districts on revenues from local sources for financing capital improvements. Current trends indicate that the degree of reliance on local revenue sources (including impact fees, assessment districts, property taxes, bond issues and service billings) is likely to continue at current levels or increase. With this background, local options for reducing impact fees to assist in the production of affordable housing are limited to measures that shift the costs of providing new services to persons other than occupants of new housing units, or to measures which directly or indirectly subsidize such fees. In the absence of such action, or the development of new state or federal funding programs, impact fees will continue to have a major effect on housing production costs throughout the 1984-1990 housing program period.

Permit fees are charged by the County Building, Planning, Public Health, and Public Works Departments. Table 4.7 shows that these fees comprise a small percentage of "indirect costs" and have relatively little impact on total production costs. This can be attributed to two factors:

- The County computes fees on a flat rate or per unit basis, and does not adjust fees to reflect staff time spent on more complex projects, as some other jurisdictions do.
- The rate of increase in permit fees has been less than that of many other jurisdictions. Since 1979, fees on a single family dwelling (per Table 4.3) have increased 30 percent from \$450 to \$585 per unit. This yields an effective rate of 5.4 percent annually, which was lower than the rate of inflation in consumer prices.

Increased in plan check and building permit fees accounted for 96 percent of the total increase in permit fees between 1979 and 1984; this is because the Building Department finances its entire budget from fee revenues. However, building fees are based on schedules provided in the Uniform Building code, and thus vary little from fees changed by other jurisdictions.

The fees shown in Table 4.7 assume that the 20-unit projects evaluated would not have significant adverse effects on the environment, and thus would not require the preparation of environmental documents. The \$100 fee shown for environmental review in Table 4.7 covers staff time required to prepare the Initial Study required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its implementing guidelines, which verifies the absence of significant environmental impacts. For projects that may have significant adverse effects, either a full Environmental Impact Report or a focused environmental study is required. The County does not charge fees for these documents, which are prepared by the developer or by private consultants for review by County staff. The cost of environmental documents can vary considerably, but costs of recent EIRs for residential projects have ranged from \$5,000 to \$8,000, while costs of focused studies of one or two specific issues (ie. geology, traffic) have ranged from \$500 to \$2,000. If environmental documents were required for the prototypical units in Table 4.7, they would add \$25-\$400 to "indirect costs" per unit.

Options for reducing permit fees to assist in the production of affordable housing include fee waivers, which could be authorized by the Board of Supervisors, and subsidies through various county, state or federal housing programs. However, current permit fees are such a minor component of total production costs that waivers or reductions will not have a substantial impact on the sales prices or rents of affordable units.

**Permit Processing Requirements.** Permit requirements and processing time are components of total housing production costs, since delays can increase financing costs. the extent to which longer processing time affects



Table 4.7 ILLUSTRATIVE PER UNIT DEVELOPMENT FEES FOR 20 UNIT SUBDIVISION, 1984

Type of Fee	Fee	Percent of Sales Price
<u>Detached 1,200 Square Foot Single Family</u>		
Impact Fees:		
Water	\$1,300 - 1,900	1.5 - 2.1
Sewer	1,750 - 2,600	2.1 - 2.9
Schools	0 - 1,270	0.0 - 1.4
Roads	0 - 500	0.0 - 0.5
Subtotal:	\$3,050 - 6,270	3.6 - 6.9
Permit Fees:		
Env. Review	\$ 5	Negligible
Subdivision	30	Negligible
Design Review	5	Negligible
Plan Check	180	0.2
Building Permits	365	0.4
Subtotal	\$ 585	0.6
Total	\$3,635 - 6,855	4.2 - 7.5
<u>Multi-unit 900 Square Foot Condominium</u>		
Impact Fees:		
Water	\$1,300 - 1,900	2.0 - 2.7
Sewer	1,750 - 2,600	2.7 - 3.7
Schools	0 - 1,270	0.0 - 1.8
Roads	0 - 500	0.0 - 0.7
Subtotal:	\$3,050 - 6,270	4.7 - 8.9
Permit Fees:		
Env. Review	\$ 5	Negligible
Subdivision	30	Negligible
Design Review	5	Negligible
Plan Check	130	0.2
Building Permits	275	0.4
Subtotal	\$ 445	0.6
Total	\$3,495 - 6,715	5.3 - 9.5

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department



costs depends primarily on the way in which a developer has structured financing for site acquisition and construction.

Factors influencing permit processing time include:

- procedural requirements established by state law for environmental review, subdivision review and various planning actions or permits (eg. rezonings, use permits);
- procedural requirements established by the County, such as environmental and subdivision review by the Project Review and Advisor Committee (P.R.A.C.) and design review by the Design Review Committee; and
- total number of staff members in relation to the total number of permit applications, as affected by the complexity of specific development proposals.

Given the procedural requirements of state law, opportunities for minimizing processing time to meet state-mandated time limits and reduce housing production costs are limited to requirements of local origin. One opportunity involves minimizing the number of residential projects for which environmental studies are required. In Sonoma County, this has been achieved through the preparation of EIRs on the specific plans which have been adopted for most unincorporated urban areas. By assessing the environmental effects of residential density policies, the county has limited the number of residential EIRs required since 1979 to nine, involving 728 units, all of which were subsequently approved for construction.

Other opportunities for reducing processing time include: 1) concurrent hearings on multiple-permit projects; 2) consolidation of the environmental and subdivision review functions of the Project Review and Advisory Committee (PRAC); and 3) expedited review of residential projects that provide low and moderate income housing.

#### **4.3 Affordable Housing in the Coastal Zone**

State law (Government Code, Sections 65588 and 65590 et. seq.) requires the Housing Element to evaluate affordable housing opportunities in the Coastal Zone, and requires the County to encourage development of such housing. Potential constraints to meeting identified housing needs include:

- Land prices, which typically exceed \$50,000 per acre;
- Construction costs, which are higher than those in more central areas of the county, due to distance and access factors associated with the Sonoma Coast; and
- Urban water and sewer services, which are limited to the Bodega Bay P.U.D. and Sea Ranch CSA.

Survey data indicate that there are currently at least 2,197 vacant urban housing sites within urban service areas in the Coastal Zone, with a development potential of 2,517 units. Building activity since January 1980 has included 139 new single-family units and an additional 18 dwellings which were limited to occupancy by low- and moderate-income employees of a specific development complex in Bodega Bay. An additional 40 affordable units are to be provided at Sea Ranch, but have not yet been constructed.

Policies of the Coastal Specific Plan provide opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable housing by establishing two "housing opportunity areas" in the community of Bodega Bay, where density bonuses of up to 150 percent are permitted for residential projects in exchange for provision of affordable units equal to one-fourth of total units. the plan also permits second-unit development in specified areas, and establishes the following residential permit requirements:

- In projects of 11 or more units, 15 percent (not less than one unit) must be affordable units and are subject to limits on future resale prices and rents.
- In projects of 5-10 units, developers must either: (a) provide affordable units equal to 15 percent of the project total, or (b) pay a fee equal to six percent of the market price of the project to a coastal zone site acquisition and development fund.
- Conversions of low- and moderate-income rental units to condominiums are prohibited, unless the conversion provides a greater affordable housing opportunity.

- Demolition of low- and moderate-income housing is prohibited, unless demolished units are replaced with units of comparable rental value.

The latter two requirements are similar to those of state legislation enacted in 1982, except that state law exempts specified types of projects, unless the local government "determines that replacement is feasible, in which event replacement dwelling units shall be required." Although the County has issued no permits for residential conversions or demolitions since adoption of the Coastal Specific Plan in 1980, criteria for determining the feasibility of replacement should be developed.

#### **4.4 Housing Costs and Affordable Housing: Objectives and Policies**

##### **4.4.1 Production of New Affordable Housing.**

Data from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 indicate the following:

- construction of 3,380 affordable units would be necessary to meet the needs of new low- and moderate-income households over the 1984-90 period; and
- there were 9,646 low- and moderate-income households paying an excessive share (30 percent or more) of income for housing in 1980.

Assuming that 1980 data is representative of current conditions, the total number of households with needs for affordable housing to be addressed during the 1984-90 period is 13,026. This total need far exceeds available resources. The maximum number of new affordable units whose availability can be reasonably assured include:

- the estimated number of additional rental units that will be eligible for Section 8 rent subsidies (235 units); and
- the estimated number of new affordable units that can be constructed with direct or indirect financial assistance from local, state or federal housing programs (300 ownership units and 915 rental units).

Provision of a sufficient number of affordable units to address the remaining need is dependent on the housing market, which can be assisted by the County through production incentives (eg. density bonuses) and specific measures that reduce production costs. If total assisted production of units is deducted from 1984-90 new housing production needs, the target for market production of units at affordable prices and rents would be 1,930 units.

#### **Objective 4A: Market Production of Housing Affordable to Low and Moderate Income Households** **Addresses Goal(s): 4-7**

It is the County's objective to encourage the housing market to construct at least 1,200 new dwelling units during the 1984-1990 period with occupancy costs that are not excessive for households with low or moderate income.

##### **Policy 4A1: Density bonuses** **Program Reference(s): 7 and 8**

It is the policy of Sonoma County to authorize an increase in maximum allowable density of 25 percent over the number of units that would otherwise be authorized on a site where the developer agrees to:

- Set aside 25 percent or more of the total units for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households at prices and rents which are affordable; or
- Set aside 50 percent or more of the total units for occupancy by persons 55 years of age or older, in accordance with the provisions SB 1553 (Chapter 133, Statutes of 1984).

Where a developer agrees to market 10 percent or more of the total units to households with a very low- or lower-incomes, the County shall authorize a density bonus of 30 percent over the number of units otherwise authorized by the General Plan or any applicable specific plan. It is the County's policy to emphasize utilization of density bonuses, rather than to provide other incentives of equivalent financial value as specified in Government Code



Section 65915. Additionally, it is the County's policy that density bonuses be limited to those unincorporated urban areas where water, sewer and other urban services and infrastructure are adequate.

**Policy 4A2: Development Ordinances, Regulations and Procedures**  
**Program Reference(s): 7-9 and 32**

It is the County's policy that any future revisions to its zoning and subdivision ordinances and building regulations (including all construction codes) be evaluated with respect to their potential impacts on housing costs; it is the County's policy that revised ordinances, regulations and procedures not add unnecessarily to housing production costs.

**Policy 4A3: cost-saving Design and Construction Techniques**  
**Program Reference(s): 8 and 9**

It is Sonoma County's policy to encourage the use of cost-saving design and construction techniques -- such as clustering, zero-lot line development, manufactured housing, owner-built housing and Class K housing -- by maintaining and revising ordinances and regulations to accommodate these techniques effectively.

**Policy 4A4: Priorities in the Review of New Residential Development**  
**Program Reference(s): Implementation through existing review procedures.**

When considering development applications for new residential development, it is the County's policy to balance the need for amenities or design features against the needs for affordable housing and for housing compatible with surrounding development. The need for affordable housing shall have priority over any amenities which are not required to ensure health and safety, mitigate environmental impacts, or ensure compatibility with surrounding development. The cost of amenities or design features required should be the minimum necessary to achieve their purpose.

**Policy 4A5: Impact and Processing Fees**  
**Program Reference(s): 8 and 9**

It is the County's policy that any development fees for residential projects be directly related to the costs of providing public facilities and improvements to services that are necessary to accommodate the project -- and to maintain the public health, safety and welfare.

**Policy 4A6: Plan Processing Procedures**  
**Program Reference(s): 8 and 9**

It is the County's policy to "streamline" its permit processing procedures by allowing concurrent public hearings on those residential development projects which require multiple permits and by allowing concurrent consideration of environmental documentation under CEQA.

**Policy 4A7: Replacement Housing for Low- and Moderate-Income Households in  
the Coastal Zone**  
**Program Reference(s): 12**

It is the County's policy to require construction of new units to replace any low- and moderate-income housing in the Coastal Zone that is demolished or converted to condominium ownership. Replacement units shall be set aside for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households and prices and rents shall be established at levels which are affordable to those households.



**Objective 4B: Production of New Assisted Housing Affordable to Low- and****Moderate-Income Households****Addresses Goal(s): 5, 6 and 7**

It is the County's objective to assist in the provision of 1,010 housing units which shall be limited to occupancy by qualified low- and moderate-income households; the prices or rents for these units shall be set at levels which are affordable to households with low or moderate incomes.

**Policy 4B1: Administration of Assisted Housing Programs****Program Reference(s): 10 and 24**

It is the County's policy that its various housing assistance programs be administered by the Sonoma County Community Development Commission.

**Policy 4B2: Allocation of Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs)****Program Reference(s): 10**

It is the County's policy to continue to allocate a significant proportion of its annual community development block grant funds to programs which address the housing needs of low- and moderate-income households.

**Policy 4B3: Surplus Land****Program Reference(s): 3**

It is the County's policy that development of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households is a high priority for re-use of government-owned lands declared surplus, provided such lands are environmentally suitable and have access to necessary public services, and that any proposed development is consistent with general plan land-use policies.

**Policy 4B4: Financial Assistance for Housing Production****Program Reference(s): 6, 13-17, 20-21, and 29**

It is the County's policy to make the fullest possible use of federal, state and local resources to assist the production of housing units for occupancy by households with low or moderate incomes. Additionally, it is the County's policy to continue to utilize mortgage revenue bonds or other mortgage-backed securities to the extent possible to obtain revenues to assist in production of low- and moderate-income housing. such assistance may be provided to housing developers and/or to qualified homebuyers. Priority shall be given to non-profit housing developers.

**Policy 4B5: Location of Assisted Units****Program Reference(s): 10**

It is the County's policy to ensure that housing assisted directly or indirectly by public funds be constructed in a variety of urban locations throughout the unincorporated county, with no undue concentration in any limited geographic area.

**4.4.2 Production and Conservation of Affordable Rental Housing**

Building activity records for the 1980-84 period indicate that multi-family housing has accounted for only 14 percent of new housing production, while data from Table 4.3 indicate that the market under conditions prevailing in 1984 is unlikely to produce new rental units which are affordable to very low-income households. since the majority of low- and moderate-income housing consumers are limited by their resources to the rental market, it is important that County policies encourage both the production of new rental units and the

conservation of existing affordable rental units. In some instances, it may be necessary or desirable that financial assistance be provided directly to renter households to reduce their expenditure for housing.

Some California communities have enacted rent control ordinances which limit the rate and amount of rent increases, in some instances through initiatives approved by voters. Although rent control may reduce housing expenditures of those households occupying controlled units, the general conclusion is that such controls may reduce the level of investment in new rental housing, both by limiting its profitability compared to other investments and by creating an investment climate characterized by uncertainty. Since production of new rental housing is as important as reasonable rents for existing units, the policy approach called for includes elements that discourage rent increases not related to the costs of owning and maintaining rental property, while ensuring an investment climate that encourages production of new rental units.

**Objective 4C: Affordable Rental Housing**

**Addresses Goal(s): 5, 6, and 7**

It is the County's objective to maintain or reduce the 1980 proportion of low- and moderate-income renter households paying more than 30 percent of income for housing (49 percent).

**Policy 4C1: Financial Assistance for Production of Affordable New Rental Housing**

**Program Reference(s): 6, 13-15, 17, 20-21, and 29**

It is the County's policy that production of affordable rental housing shall have the highest priority in the utilization of revenues from the sale of mortgage-backed revenue bonds. Since such housing will of necessity be at higher densities, it is the County's policy that assisted rental housing be located within the unincorporated urban service areas. Where feasible or practical, it shall be the County's policy to utilize other incentives in combination with interest-rate reductions for this purpose: these incentives may include "write-downs" of land costs and fee reductions. the County shall encourage and give priority to projects sponsored by non-profit organizations.

**Policy 4C2: Housing Opportunity Areas**

**Program Reference(s): 1-4 and 8**

It is the County's policy that updates of the land-use elements of the general plan and applicable specific plans identify particular sites and locations within urban service areas which are appropriate and suitable for construction of new moderate- and high-density rental housing. Additionally, once such areas are identified, it shall be the County's policy to develop incentives and programs which are "targeted" to development of multi-unit rental housing affordable to very low- and lower-income households in those areas.

**Policy 4C3: Rent Increases and Regulation**

**Program Reference(s): 11**

It is the County's policy not to establish rent controls for new or existing units; however, the county shall attempt to discourage increases in residential rents that are not reasonable related to the costs of owning and maintaining rental property, including a reasonable return on rental property investments, by establishing a mechanism for the provision of voluntary rent mediation services in situations where there are rent disputes.

**Policy 4C4: Financial Assistance to Low- and Moderate-Income Renter Households**

**Program Reference(s): 18-19 and 21-22**

It is the County's policy to make to the fullest possible use of state and federal programs which provide a portion of the rent payments on behalf of low- and moderate-income households; priority shall be given to households with very low- and lower-incomes. These programs shall continue to be administered by the Sonoma County Community Development Commission.



## **5.0 DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING SERVICES; MEETING SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS OF POPULATION SUB-GROUPS**

Some population sub-groups, such as the elderly, the disabled, households with female heads and farmworker households, have particular housing needs that may not be fully addressed by the market. California law (Government Code, Section 65583) requires an analysis of the special needs of these sub-groups, to ensure an adequate distribution of housing service.

### **5.1 Population Sub-Groups With Special Housing Needs**

#### **5.1.1 The Elderly Population**

Table 5.1 shows the distribution of the population over age 55 in 1980 by unincorporated planning area; persons in the 55-64 age cohort are included because they will reach age 65 during the 1984-90 housing program period. The table shows that 63.7 percent of the over-55 population and 65 percent of the over-65 population of the unincorporated county live in three planning areas:

Santa Rosa, Sonoma and Sebastopol. Unincorporated areas whose total population includes high proportions of persons over 65 are the Sonoma (16.1 percent), Santa Rosa and Russian River (13.2 percent each) areas. Unincorporated areas with high proportions of persons aged 55-64 include Sonoma Coast (12.9 percent), Cloverdale (12.0 percent), Sonoma Valley and Healdsburg (11.0 percent each) areas.

The proportion of total county population over age 65 increased from 12.9 percent in 1970 to 13.5 percent in 1980; the proportion of residents over 55 also increased during that decade. Given the age distribution of the 1980 population and the attractiveness of the county as a retirement site, it is likely that persons over 65 will comprise even higher proportions of the 1990 population in the unincorporated parts of all planning areas except Petaluma, Rohnert Park/Cotati and Healdsburg.

#### **5.1.2 Minority Populations**

Although differences in definitions and procedures by the U.S. Bureau of the Census make comparisons between 1970 and 1980 difficult, it appears that racial and ethnic minorities' share of county population increased during the decade, although not dramatically. The largest increases were for Asian and Pacific Islanders and the category of "other". With the exception of the Hispanic population group, the size of all ethnic/racial groups grew more rapidly than did the total population. All racial minorities combined constituted only 7.2 percent of the county's residents in 1980, while the Hispanic category -- which is not a racial classification -- comprised 6.9 percent. In comparison to other counties in California, Sonoma County's population remains relatively homogeneous in its racial and ethnic composition. In recent years, the most severe housing problems have been experienced by recent immigrants and refugees, especially those with origins in Latin America and Southeast Asia.

#### **5.1.3 Farmworkers**

Reliable data on the size of the farmworker population and its housing needs are difficult to obtain, due to the seasonal and migratory nature of farm work and the participation of undocumented workers in the agricultural labor force. However, the California Human Development Commission (CHDC) estimated that in 1984 there were 4,200 documented, year-round farmworker households in Sonoma County, containing about 21,000 persons, living in about 3,000 farmworker housing units.

#### **5.1.4 Single-parent Households With Children**

Data from 1980 indicated that over 14,700 family households residing in Sonoma County were comprised of single-parent families with children; approximately 27 percent of these families (5,512) occupied housing units



Table 5.1 POPULATION OVER AGE 55 BY PLANNING AREA, 1980

Unincorporated Planning Area	Age 55-64	(%)	Age 65+	(%)	Total	(%)	Population Age 55+
Sonoma Coast/ Gualala Basin	699	( 5.2)	660	( 3.8)	1,359	( 4.5)	25.1
Cloverdale/ N.E. County	597	( 4.4)	626	( 3.7)	1,223	( 4.0)	24.5
Healdsburg and Environs	1,359	( 10.0)	1,568	( 9.3)	2,927	( 9.6)	23.8
Russian River	1,088	( 8.0)	1,722	( 10.2)	2,810	( 9.2)	21.6
Santa Rosa and Environs	4,120	( 30.4)	5,239	( 31.0)	9,359	( 30.7)	23.6
Sebastopol and Environs	1,727	( 12.7)	1,964	( 11.6)	3,691	( 12.1)	20.5
Rohnert Park- Cotati and Environs	469	( 3.5)	510	( 3.0)	979	( 3.2)	17.2
Petaluma and Environs	910	( 6.7)	852	( 5.0)	1,762	( 5.8)	16.5
Sonoma Valley	2,583	( 19.1)	3,783	( 22.4)	6,366	( 20.9)	26.1
Total Unincorporated	13,552	(100.0)	16,924	(100.0)	30,476	(100.0)	22.9
All Cities	15,225	---	23,425	---	38,650	---	23.3
County Total	28,777	---	40,349	---	69,126	---	23.1

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department, from STF 1A, Bureau of the Census

located in the unincorporated areas. A large majority of these households, more than three-fourths, were families with a female as the head-of-household. More than 3,800 female headed households residing in unincorporated areas included children under age 17; about one-fourth of these households had incomes below the census-defined poverty level, compared to just eleven percent of all families with children under age 17. Obtaining adequate income and housing are especially difficult for female-headed households with small children. In 1980, nearly 700 such households with children age five or less resided in unincorporated areas and more than one-half of these households had incomes below the poverty level.

#### **5.1.5 The Handicapped Population**

According to 1981 data from the California Department of Rehabilitation, 23,630 county residents (about 7.7 percent of total population) had some form of physical or mental disability. Data from the 1980 census indicated that there were over 700 residents in the unincorporated county (5.1 percent of total population) with chronic disabilities that limited the type or amount of work they could perform, of which one-half were prevented from working by their disability.

#### **5.1.6 Large Families**

For purposes of the housing element, large families are defined as households composed of five or more related persons. Unfortunately, the Census provides no specific data on family size, but does report on household size. Therefore this plan uses household size data as an indicator of family size, although some large households may consist of related individuals living together voluntarily. Data from the 1980 Census indicated that there were 5,360 households composed of five or more persons residing in unincorporated areas of the county. Of these, 3,440 (6.9 percent of all households) are five-person households, and 1,920 (3.9 percent of all households) are composed of six or more persons.

#### **5.1.7 The Homeless Population and Other Persons with Emergency Shelter Needs**

The housing needs of homeless persons are more difficult to measure and assess than those of any other population sub-group. Since these individuals have no permanent address they are not likely to be counted in the Census, and since they are unlikely to have stable employment the marked provides few housing opportunities. Available data on the homeless population is limited to an August 1983 report by the Emergency Shelter Task Force of the Sonoma County Council for Community Services. This report compiled data on requests for emergency shelter received by local social service agencies during January 1983. The report indicates that 29 of 32 agencies surveyed received requests for emergency shelter during the survey month. The frequency of requests was as follows:

"Several" to 12 per day	- 4 agencies
"Several times a week"	- 9 agencies
"Several times a month"	- 5 agencies
"Once in a great while"	- 11 agencies

The total number of persons requesting assistance during the survey month was 534, of an average of about 17 per day. Table 5.2 indicates that persons with the most serious unmet needs were transients, the mentally ill, single women, single men and the handicapped.

### **5.2 Meeting Special Housing Needs: Constraints and Opportunities**

Special housing needs of the population sub-groups cited in previous section include: affordable housing, accessible housing, protection from housing discrimination, large-family housing, sound housing for farmworkers and emergency or temporary shelter for homeless persons.

### 5.2.1 Affordability of Housing

Constraints and opportunities related to increasing the supply of affordable housing are discussed in detail in Section 4.2. All groups with special needs have problems of housing affordability, often due to limited ability to participate in education or training programs that would increase income and housing opportunities or to participate in the labor market because of advance age, disabilities, the necessity of providing care for small children, or other factors. Income characteristics of each group are summarized as follows:

**Elderly.** Data from the 1980 Census indicate that 2,693 elderly households, or about one out of every ten elderly households, had annual incomes in 1979 which were below the federal poverty levels for elderly households.

TABLE 5.2: Persons Requesting Emergency Shelter, January 1983

<u>Persons with Unmet Housing Needs</u>	<u>Percent of Agencies Reporting Need</u>
Single Men	42.9
Single Women	46.4
Single Women (pregnant)	17.8
All Families:	25.0
Families	32.1
Single parents with children	21.4
Families with Teenagers	21.4
Large Families	25.0
Families without children	25.0
Teenagers	25.0
Elderly	21.4
Students	21.4
Handicapped	42.9
Mentally Ill	46.4
Alcoholics	25.0
Ex-Offenders	21.4
Transients	60.7

Source: Sonoma County Council for Community Services, August 1983.

Although specific data on elderly households paying more than 30 percent of income for housing are unavailable, the maximum monthly SSI benefit for a two-person household was \$496 in 1984, while the maximum monthly Social Security benefit for a retired couple (assuming one wage earner) was \$1,055. These data indicate that elderly households that do not own their own homes or do not have savings or retirement benefits from private sources are likely to pay more than 30 percent of income for housing. Households owning their homes or receiving other income may still have affordability problems if other expenses, such as medical care, consume a high proportion of total income.

**Racial and Ethnic Minorities.** Data from the 1980 Census indicate that minority households in unincorporated areas were two to eight times more likely to have incomes in 1979 which were below the federal poverty level (\$7,412 for a family of four) than were white households. The minority groups most seriously affected by very low incomes were blacks, with just over one-fourth of these households below the poverty level, and Native Americans, with more than eight of every ten households below the poverty level. In comparison about 12 percent of all white households had incomes below the poverty level, while just over 18 percent of Asian and Hispanics experienced income deprivation.



**Farmworkers and Farmworker Households.** Since the average income of farmworker households was estimated at \$5-10,000 per year in 1984, affordable rental housing is a primary need. The housing problem of these households is compounded by the seasonal and migratory nature of farm work, which means that many farmworker households pay high rents for short-term tenancies.

**Female-Headed Households with Children.** Since women (particularly those with children) may enter the housing market suddenly -- without recent work experience -- due to death or divorce, affordable rental housing is a primary need. In a worst-case situation, a woman with two children eligible for federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) would receive about \$555 per month in 1984, of which \$180 was targeted for housing. Such a family might also be eligible for food stamps (assuming they had no assets, such as a car, valued over \$1,500), but benefits would average only about \$125 month. Rent survey data indicate there are few one bedroom or larger units available in this rent range.

**Affordable Housing Opportunities.** Several existing housing programs provide assistance to groups with special needs:

**Elderly and Handicapped.** Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds and tax increment revenues from redevelopment project areas can be used to construct, or assist the construction of housing projects for the elderly or handicapped. In addition, the federal Section 202 (of the Housing and Community Development Act) program provides up to 100 percent financing to non-profit sponsors of housing for lower income elderly and handicapped households.

**Farmworkers.** Farmworker housing may also be assisted by Community Development Block Grants and/or tax increment revenues. In addition, the state HCD's Farmworker Grant program provides funds for land purchase and site improvements for farmworker housing, but does not finance actual construction. At the federal level, the Farmers Home Administration provides construction and purchase financing for very low and lower income housing, including single- and multi-family units, subject to a \$60,000 cap on unit sales prices. These loans are only available in designated rural areas; unincorporated areas in Sonoma County that qualify for the rural designation include Windsor, Geyserville, the Russian River and Coastal areas and Sonoma Valley.

**Other Special Needs Groups.** An additional opportunity to provide affordable housing results from the under utilization of existing units. Census data indicates that 96.7 percent of occupied units countywide had less than 1.00 persons per room, with the corresponding 1980 proportion for unincorporated areas 95.1 percent. A larger proportion of these units may be occupied at rates less than .50 persons per room, reflecting trends towards smaller household sizes, and the increasing numbers of married couples whose children have left home. These units present opportunities for shared housing, which allows compatible, unrelated families and individuals to cut housing costs, and can also provide companionship and assist with child care. The Sonoma County Community Development Commission maintains a shared-housing information board, facilitating contacts between interested persons.

## **5.2.2 Accessible Housing and Congregate Housing**

Data from the 1980 Census indicate that 12.9 percent of all persons aged 65 or older, and 0.7 percent of all persons aged 16-64 had disabilities that limited their use of public transportation. It is reasonable to assume that most of these persons are unable to occupy two-story units, or upper-floor units in multi-family structures without elevators, and may require special facilities (eg. ramps, railings) to occupy ground-floor apartment units. A recently enacted state law, effective July 1, 1984, requires all ground floor apartment units in projects of five or more units to be accessible to the handicapped. The law requires accessible design of walks, ramps and doors, and requires that interior fixtures be readily adaptable for use by the handicapped, subject to a provision that limits the overall cost of these requirements to \$600 per unit.

The increasing population of individuals of advanced age indicates a need for housing which is designed to serve the physical and social requirements of these persons. Often termed "congregate housing", this type of shelter frequently consists of small individual units without kitchens (or with minimal provisions for cooking) with

some common facilities and services, including shared arrangements for meals and housekeeping service. The marketplace appears to be responding to the demand for this type of shelter, although the costs of these housing facilities may be beyond the financial means of a large share of the elderly population.

### **5.2.3 Protection from Housing Discrimination**

Laws at the federal, state and local levels prohibit housing discrimination against various population sub-groups. State laws prohibit discrimination on basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, age (40+), marital status or physical handicaps; they also prohibit discrimination against cancer patients and retaliatory actions by landlords. Although state law also prohibits discrimination against families with children (except in mobile home parks and housing projects for the elderly, authority to enforce this law has not yet been delegated to any state agency; all other discrimination complaints are under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco office of the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DHEF).

At the local level, an adopted goal of the general plan calls for the elimination of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, ethnicity and age, while all assisted housing projects in which the County participates are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex and marital status. Assisted projects are also subject to the anti-discrimination requirements of any state or federal program involved in project funding. The County also participates in the funding of SCRIMS, which provides voluntary mediation services for any alleged violation of state anti-discrimination laws, and provides forms and assistance in filing complaints with the state DFEH. During fiscal year 1983-84, SCRIMS received 9 complaints of racial/ethnic discrimination and 29 complaints of discrimination against children, while DFEH accepted two complaints of discrimination for filing.

The principal opportunity for improving the county's current anti-discrimination policies involves amending existing policy language so as to include all forms of housing discrimination prohibited by state law, while continuing to support information, mediation and referral services provided by SCRIMS.

### **5.2.4 Large-Family Housing**

Data from the 1980 Census indicated that there were 5,168 housing units located in unincorporated areas which had four or more bedrooms. although the supply of large units is sufficient to house more than 95 percent of households with five or more persons, this does not mean that all large families (or households) live in units of adequate size. The Census indicated that there were 1,308 housing units with 1.01 or more persons per room in the unincorporated county, and 3,832 such units countywide. On a countywide basis, 9.2 percent of all overcrowded units were occupied by racial minority households, while one-fourth of all overcrowded units were occupied by Spanish-origin households.

The availability of large units can be affected by overall housing prices and rents, which sometimes encourage occupancy of such units by unrelated individuals and deprive large families of housing opportunities. Long-term household size trends mean that many large units may be older units which bring premium prices or rents, or they may be vulnerable to demolition or conversion to multi-family occupancy. The prospect of continued declines in average household size means that the market has little incentive to provide new large units; the costs of constructing such units mean that, even if provided, these dwellings may not be affordable to large families.

Although the proportion of overcrowded units countywide declined from 6.7 percent in 1970 to 2.8 percent of all units in 1980, the continued availability of units with four or more bedrooms is important to large families and households. In 1984, there were no County policies which constrained or encouraged the construction, conversion or demolition of large units.



### 5.2.5 Sound Farmworker Housing

The Codes and Standards Division of the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) enforces the standards of the Employee Housing Act for housing occupied by five or more employees of the same employer. In 1984, there were 34 farm labor camps in the county, housing 516 agricultural employees. The state inspects this housing upon initial certification and through annual unannounced inspections.

Farmworker housing not under the jurisdiction of the state is subject to construction, housing and health codes enforced by the county's Building and Public Health departments. Since most farmworkers live in housing that is not under state jurisdiction, enforcement of these codes is the principal means of ensuring sound farmworker housing. However, unlike the mandatory inspection requirements of state law, local codes require enforcement agencies to have "reasonable cause" to believe a code violation exists before entering a dwelling for inspection purposes. This has been interpreted as requiring a request (or complaint) by the owner or occupant of a unit, unless the violation is clearly visible. In the case of visible violations, inspections without owner or occupant consent can be made by obtaining an "inspection warrant" through the courts. For violations involving interior features or fixtures, a request (or complaint) by the owner or occupant is required. Since many code violations involve interior conditions, and since many farmworkers are reluctant to file formal complaints against property owners (who may also be their employers), many violations go unreported. If such violations are reported by a third party, enforcement agencies may be unable to act.

### 5.2.6 Emergency Shelter

Several community service agencies, some with partial funding from government sources, provide temporary housing for homeless persons. However, the total number of beds available at all such facilities was about 88 (excluding floorspace) in 1984. Available housing is clearly inadequate to meet the needs identified by the Emergency Shelter Task Force. On the other hand, there is no reporting mechanism to verify the scale of need that currently exists.

Opportunities for meeting the housing needs of homeless persons appear limited to measures requiring direct financial or material support by local social service agencies and/or county government. The Emergency Shelter Task Force report recommends:

- the rental of housing units in which families can be given shelter for a maximum of seven nights;
- the acquisition of a large building to provide additional emergency shelter for families;
- the acquisition of property suitable for development with manufactured housing, also for the purpose of providing emergency shelter for families;
- development of a facility similar in style to the Rescue Mission for homeless, mentally ill persons; and
- acquisition of a large house, where rooms could be rented by the week to homeless persons receiving General Assistance or SSI benefits.

## 5.3 Distribution of Housing Services: County Objectives and Policies

County objectives and policies regarding expansion of the supply of affordable housing for all low- and moderate-income households, including those with special housing needs, are presented in Section 4.4.

### 5.3.1 Housing for the Elderly

The housing needs of the elderly population, while including affordable and accessible housing, also include access to medical care, transportation and social activities. Many elderly persons find that housing specifically designed for their needs, such as "life care" or congregate housing facilities, provide a package of services that meets all these needs. The following objective is based on the number of housing units that are likely to be funded under the HUD Section 202 program in the unincorporated county over the 1984-90 period, as estimated by Community Development Commission staff.



**Objective 5A: Production of Housing for the Elderly**  
**Addresses Goal(s): 5-8**

It is the County's objective to encourage the construction of 45 assisted housing units reserved for occupancy by low- and moderate-income elderly households during the period 1984 to 1990.

**Policy 5A1: Financial Assistance for Production of Elderly Housing**  
**Program Reference(s): 6, 13, 14, 17, 20 and 21**

It shall be the policy of Sonoma County to utilize to the extent possible available state and federal programs which provide financial assistance to reduce the costs of developing housing for the elderly; such financial assistance may include below market interest rate loans, greater loan-to-value ratios, or other types of assistance.

**Objective 5B: Innovative Design of Housing for the Elderly**  
**Addresses Goal(s): 4 and 7**

It is the County's objective to encourage production of housing projects which have design features that are tailored specifically to the needs of persons of advanced age; these design approaches include "life care" and "congregate housing" and may include approaches that accommodate a mixture of age and income groups and of handicapped and non-handicapped persons. Additionally, it is the County's objective that all such housing facilities be located within urban service areas, and that sites be located where there is easy access to transportation, medical, retail, and other services required by the elderly.

**Policy 5B1: Plan and Zoning Ordinance Revisions**  
**Program Reference(s) 1, 2, and 8**

It shall be the policy of Sonoma County in reviewing and updating the general and specific plan land-use elements and the County's zoning ordinance to assure that revisions and amendments accommodate development of congregate housing as a use allowed subject to approval of a use permit in specific zoning districts. Revised policies and regulations may include waiver of maximum density restrictions, modification of parking requirements, and other changes which reflect the unique character of this housing type.

### **5.3.2 Accessible Housing**

Accessible housing needs of the elderly and handicapped are addressed by recent state legislation, which should be vigorously enforced by the County. The following objective represents a conservative estimate of the number of units subject to site accessibility regulations over the 1984-90 period.

**Objective 5C: Production of Accessible Housing**  
**Addresses Goal(s): 7**

It is the County's objective to encourage construction of accessible housing units equal to 10 percent of that 1984-90 unit needs (550 units).

**Policy 5C1: Residential Development Permit Review Procedures**  
**Program Reference(s): Implementation through existing review procedures**

It shall be the policy of Sonoma County to review residential development proposals to enforce accessible housing requirements of state law, and to encourage maximum use of accessible design in projects not subject to state requirements.

### **5.3.3 Protection from Housing Discrimination**

It is the intent of the housing element to adopt anti-discrimination policies which are in conformity with current state and federal law.

#### **Objective 5D: Elimination of Housing Discrimination**

**Addresses Goal(s): 7**

It is Sonoma County's objective to discourage any discrimination in the housing market and in assisted housing programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age (except in elderly housing and mobile home parks), disease or handicaps.

#### **Policy 5D1: Mediation of Housing Discrimination Complaints**

**Program References(s): 11 and 26**

It shall be Sonoma County's policy to continue to support the efforts of SCRIMS, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing, and professional associations to enforce anti-discrimination laws through mediation of disputes and provision of assistance in filing discrimination complaints.

### **5.3.4 Large-Family Housing**

The housing needs of large families with low- or moderate-incomes are not likely to be addressed by the housing market. Thus it is important to conserve the existing stock of units with four or more bedrooms.

#### **Objective 5E: Conservation of Large-Family Housing**

**Addresses Goal(s): 7 and 14**

It is the County's objective to minimize demolitions or conversions to multi-family occupancy of housing units with four or more bedrooms.

#### **Policy 5E1: Demolition or Conversion of Large-family Housing**

**Program Reference(s): Implementation through existing review procedures.**

It shall be the County's policy to discourage the demolition or conversion to multi-family occupancy of units having four or more bedrooms, unless:

- (A) the unit is found to be substandard and not suitable for rehabilitation upon inspection by the County Building Department; or
- (B) conversion of the unit to multi-family occupancy is intended to meet the housing needs of special needs groups, as determined by the Planning Director.

#### **Policy 5E2: Financial Assistance to Large-Families with Low- or Moderate-Income**

**Program Reference(s): 13-20**

It shall be the policy of Sonoma County to place priority on assistance to large families in utilizing federal programs which provide financial assistance to households for the purpose of paying a portion of housing expenditures.

### **5.3.5 Farmworker Housing**

In 1984 the County was co-sponsoring a study of farmworker housing needs with the City of Healdsburg. This study, when completed, may serve as a model for similar efforts in other areas of the County. At the same time, the inspection and correction of alleged substandard farmworker housing and abatement of any violations is a priority.



**Objective 5F: Elimination of Substandard Farmworker Housing**  
**Addresses Goal(s) 7**

It is the County's objective that all cases of substandard farmworker housing under County jurisdiction be promptly investigated. As resources permit, enforcement proceedings should attempt to abate unsafe conditions and to bring lawfully-constructed units up to code standards so that they remain available for occupancy.

**Policy 5F1: Production of New Farmworker Housing**  
**Program Reference(s): 1, 2, 6, 10, 15, 16, 20 and 25**

It is the County's policy to encourage construction of new housing designed for occupancy by farmworkers; the highest priority is for year-round family housing and the second priority is housing for transient single-persons. Any multi-unit housing which is intended for year-round occupancy by farmworkers and their families shall be restricted to locations which are served by public water and sewerage systems; housing intended for transient occupancy by migrant farmworkers may be permitted in rural locations which are accessible to agricultural lands. Where feasible, the County shall provide assistance to organizations in providing new farmworker housing.

**Policy 5F2: Farmworker Housing Code Enforcement Activities**  
**Program Reference(s): 23**

It is the County's policy that farmworker housing code enforcement activities shall be intended to abate unsafe conditions and to expedite, where practicable, the rehabilitation and continued availability of lawfully-constructed farmworker housing units.

**Policy 5F3: Farmworker Under State Jurisdiction**  
**Program Reference(s): 23, 25 and 28**

It shall be the County's policy to encourage the Codes and Standards Division of the State Department of Housing and community development to vigorously enforce state standards for employee-occupied housing within Sonoma County.

### **5.3.6 Emergency Shelter**

The homeless population has the most pressing housing problems of any group with special needs. These needs may exist on a long-term basis for some individuals, while for others the need may occur suddenly (as, for example, upon divorce or abandonment) and extend for only a short period of time.

**Objective 5G: Increasing the Capacity of Emergency Shelter Facilities**  
**Addresses Goal(s): 7**

It is the County's objective to increase the number of beds available in emergency housing facilities by at least 100 percent (from 88 to at least 176 beds) during the 1984 to 1990 period.

**Policy 5G1: Financial Assistance for Development of Emergency Shelter Facilities**  
**Program Reference(s): 10 and 27**

It is the County's policy to provide financial assistance to agencies which provide emergency housing of the purpose of expanding the number of units or beds secured to accommodate this need; such assistance may be provided from general fund sources or from local, state or federal program sources. Assistance may be provided to secure transitional housing as well as overnight shelter for both individuals and families.



## **6.0 HOUSING QUALITY: ASSURING THAT HOUSING IS PROVIDED AND MAINTAINED IN ACCEPTABLE AND SERVICEABLE CONDITION**

Although only a small share of Sonoma County's existing housing stock is so seriously deteriorated as to constitute a health and safety hazard, households occupying these units suffer an extreme housing deprivation. Furthermore, the County's concern extends to units with less-severe deficiencies, since the useful economic life of these dwellings will be shortened unless improvements are made to prevent their continued deterioration and possible abandonment. Within the unincorporated urban service areas, these deteriorating units are most often concentrated in limited areas of several adjacent blocks, while substandard rural housing is dispersed more evenly throughout the countryside. The major exception to this generalization occurs in various locations along the Russian River, where a number of older units originally constructed for seasonal use have deteriorated in quality. Issues related to housing quality extend to new construction, since standards for new dwellings affect both their costs to consumers and their durability.

### **6.1 Assessment of Housing Quality Needs**

#### **6.1.1 Quality of New Residential Construction**

**Siting and Structural Requirements.** Quality standards for new residential construction are established by construction codes and subdivision requirements intended to provide structurally sound units on sites free of geological, flooding or other safety hazards. The cost implications of these requirements were assessed in subsection 4.2.3.

**Energy Conservation.** The State of California's Title 24 energy conservation requirements (effective July 1983) establish "energy budgets", or a maximum energy use levels, for new residential units in sixteen different climate zones throughout the state. The requirements of the regulations can be met using either of the following approaches:

**Prescriptive Approach.** The regulations allow builders to choose among three packages of energy conservation measures, each of which meet energy budget requirements.

**Performance Approach.** This approach gives a builder great flexibility in selecting a mix of design, materials and equipment that meet energy budget requirements. However, the builder must be able to demonstrate compliance with budget requirements.

#### **6.1.2 Quality of the Existing Housing Stock**

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) has conducted a computer analysis 1980 Census Population and Housing records to estimate the number of substandard housing units in the county (excluding Santa Rosa).

The criteria for identifying substandard units included:

- lack of plumbing facilities;
- overcrowding (1.01+ persons per room); and
- for owner-occupied units, an age/value criterion that tabulated all units built before 1940 valued at less than \$30,000;
- for renter-occupied units, a rent/income criterion that correlated low-income occupants to low rents.

The results of the analysis, shown in Table 6.1, indicate that 5,180 housing units (5.8 percent of all units) meet the criteria for classification as substandard housing. The methodology employed in generating estimates of substandard housing is likely, however, to understate the total number of substandard units. One of the

identified units, more than 95 percent were classified as suitable for rehabilitation. More than four out of every ten of these units were occupied by very low- or lower-income households.

To determine the probable distribution of substandard units in unincorporated areas of the county, four census variables were used to rank such areas:

- percentage of units lacking kitchen facilities;
- percentage of units with 1/2 bath or less;
- percentage of units without central heating constructed before 1929; and
- total percentage of units constructed before 1939.

TABLE 6.1: Substandard Housing Units, 1980

Tenure Type	Total Occupied	Suitable For Rehabilitation		Not Suitable For Rehabilitation		Total
		Occupied By Lower Income Household	Vacant	Occupied	Vacant	
Owner	3,321	1,262	43	130	2	3,496
Renter	1,600	928	21	62	1	1,684
TOTAL	4,921	2,190	64	192	3	5,180

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The results of this analysis indicate that the unincorporated Santa Rosa, Russian River, Sonoma Valley and Sebastopol planning areas probably have the highest concentrations of substandard units. In general, this corresponds with the distribution of code violation complaints received by the Building Department between January 1 and September 30, 1984. Of 47 complaints received, 26 percent were in the Santa Rosa area, 57 percent were divided equally among the Russian River, Sebastopol and Petaluma areas, and 11 percent were from the Sonoma Valley area, with just six percent from the remaining four planning areas combined. The only anomaly in these data is the high incidence of violations (19 percent of all reported) in the Petaluma planning area.

## 6.2 Maintaining and Improving Housing Quality: Constraints and Opportunities

### 6.2.1 New Construction

The increasing cost of new housing encourages construction without proper permits, perhaps in violation of standards established by construction codes. In this sense, market factors act as a constraint on the quality of some new residential units. Principal opportunities affected by the market include manufactured housing techniques, which reduce the per unit costs of compliance with applicable codes, and innovative energy conservation materials and techniques, which can lower costs of compliance with Title 24 requirements.

**Siting and Structural Requirements.** County government's role in the construction of new housing involves the administration of plans, ordinances and codes designed to ensure sound construction. Opportunities for maintaining high levels of quality in new residential construction are:

- Continued enforcement of plan, ordinance and code requirements;



- Utilization of the development review process to assure that new residential construction is authorized only in areas known to be free of environmental hazards (for example: fault zones, slope instability, unstable or impermeable soils, or high noise levels) and incompatible land-uses.

**Energy Conservation.** The Title 24 Energy Conservation requirements ensure that effective conservation measures will be incorporated in the design of new units. However, active or passive solar designs may be ineffective if access to sunlight is blocked out by subsequent construction. An opportunity to preserve access to sunlight is provided by the California Solar Rights Act of 1978 (Government Code, Section 65850.5), which allows local governments to adopt an ordinance permitting the dedication of solar easements as a condition of approval of tentative subdivision maps.

Opportunities to reduce the cost of energy conservation measures in both new and existing units include the following tax incentives:

- the state Solar Energy Tax Credit provides up to 50 percent of the cost of specified solar energy systems, or \$3000 (less any federal tax credit taken), whichever is less (expires December 31, 1986).
- the state Conservation Tax Credit provides up to 35 percent of the cost of specified energy conservation measures (eg. insulation and weatherstripping), or \$1,500, whichever is less (expires December 31, 1986).
- the state Solar System Property Tax Exemption exempts specified systems (eg. solar water heating, photovoltaic cells) from property taxation or inclusion in reassessments (expires December 31, 1986).
- the federal Residential Conservation Tax Credit provides a 15 percent tax reduction for specified conservation measures (eg. insulation, weatherstripping), to a maximum of \$300 (expires December 31, 1985).

## 6.2.2 Existing Housing Stock

Since county government has primary responsibility for enforcing construction and health codes, constraints on maintaining the quality of the existing stock involve situations in which applicable codes are not enforced or are enforced flexibly so as to assure continued availability of units (see discussion of farmworker housing needs in Subsection 5.2.5). Market factors that constrain maintenance and improvement of the existing housing stock include the costs of labor and materials required to make needed repairs, and the costs of any financing required for maintenance or rehabilitation expenditures. In some instances rent levels obtained for units may not be sufficient to justify expenditures based upon an owner's investment criteria. Market opportunities for reducing these costs are limited to two energy conservation programs operated by PG&E:

- the Zero-Interest Program (ZIP) provides no-interest loans of up to \$3500 per unit for insulation, weatherproofing, thermal doors or windows, and other conservation measures. Loan payments are added to utility bills.
- the Cashback program provides cash rebates of up to \$300 in exchange for installation of ceiling insulations and two of the following: caulking, weatherstripping, water heater blankets or low-flow showerheads. If ceiling insulation is infeasible, three of the other conservation measures are required.

Governmental opportunities for improving the quality of the existing housing stock include the CDBG-funded rehabilitation loan program and use of tax increment funds from proposed redevelopment projects in the Windsor, Roseland and Sonoma Valley areas. State redevelopment law requires that 20 percent of tax increment revenues be used to provide low- and moderate-income housing, and a portion of all of this requirement could be met through housing rehabilitation programs. Conservation measures are also eligible for funding under the county's existing rehabilitation loan program. However, a combination of zero-interest loans from PG&E and federal and state tax credits is likely to provide the least costly means of financing energy-conserving improvements to existing units in many cases. However, PG&E and other programs will not provide energy conservation assistance to households occupying units with structural deficiencies; thus many lower-income residents (who do not benefit from tax credits) are ineligible. In these cases, the County's rehabilitation loan



program is the sole source of assistance for structural repairs needed to allow low-income households to benefit from PG&E and other conservation programs.

### **6.3 Housing Quality: County Objectives and Policies**

#### **6.3.1: Quality of New Residential Construction**

The principal policy issues related to new construction are:

- the level of quality in new construction necessary to ensure sound housing and minimize long term maintenance and energy costs.
- the design of new housing projects, including internal site design and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

#### **Objective 6A: Quality of New Residential Construction Addresses Goal(s) 9-12**

It is the County's objective that all new residential construction meet minimum quality standards of adopted health and construction codes, but to allow some flexibility in construction methods for dwellings located on large parcels in rural areas (e.g. Class K housing).

#### **Policy 6A1: Code Enforcement Program Reference(s): 23 and 28**

It is the County's policy to maintain the requirements contained in all adopted health and construction codes.

#### **Policy 6A2: Residential Development Permit Review Procedures Program Reference(s): 32-33 and existing review procedures.**

It is the County's policy to utilize environmental, subdivision, design review and other permit procedures to encourage:

- (a) Internal design of new residential projects to provide a healthy, comfortable and secure residential environment, with adverse traffic, noise and other environmental impacts mitigated in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its implementing guidelines;
- (b) Design of new residential projects which conserves the positive environmental and cultural qualities of existing residential neighborhoods by being substantially compatible with the surrounding natural and built environment.
- (c) Implementation of Title 24 energy conservations requirements of state law and provision for the dedication of solar access easements where appropriate.

#### **6.3.2: Quality of the Existing Housing Stock**

Policy issues related to the quality of the existing housing stock include:

- the need for precise data on the scale and extent of substandard housing in unincorporated areas; and
- the means for ensuring maintenance of existing sound units and the rehabilitation (where feasible) of existing substandard units.

Objective 6.2 below calls for rehabilitation of 25 percent of existing substandard units; the intent is to achieve market rehabilitation of 915 units through enforcement of existing construction codes and to provide financial

assistance to rehabilitate another 400 substandard units which are occupied by lower-income households. This latter target is based on the number of units whose rehabilitation is likely to be funded through existing programs over the 1984-90 period, as estimated by the Sonoma County Community Development Commission.

**Objective 6B: Rehabilitation of Substandard Units**  
**Implements Goal(s): 8 and 10**

It is the County's objective to encourage rehabilitation of 1,300 existing units with structural or other deficiencies during the next six years, restoring them to sound condition in accordance with the requirements of adopted health and construction codes.

**Policy 6B1: Conversion of Seasonal Housing units**  
**Program Reference(s): 28**

It is the County's policy that when seasonal housing units which conform to applicable zoning regulations are structurally modified for the purpose of enabling year-round occupancy, the modifications shall comply with adopted health and construction codes.

**Policy 6B2: Consolidation of County Enforcement Activities**  
**Program Reference(s): 23 and 28**

It shall be the policy of the County after review of alternative administrative arrangements, to designate one county department or agency as having primary responsibility for inspection and abatement of substandard housing.

**Policy 6B3: Replacement of Substandard Affordable Housing Units**  
**Program Reference(s): 10, 13-20, 23 and 29**

It is the County's policy to give priority to residents of substandard affordable units who are displaced by code enforcement or redevelopment activities in the selection for occupants of new housing units in assisted housing projects.

**Policy 6B4: Energy Conservation in the Existing Housing Stock**  
**Program Reference(s): 19 and 29-31**

It is the County's policy to utilize to the fullest extent possible available state and federal energy conservation programs in order to weatherize to minimum standards housing units built prior to the effective date of Title 24 energy conservation requirements.

**Policy 6B5: Coordination of Energy Conservation and Rehabilitation Programs**  
**Program Reference(s): 10, 19 and 29-31**

It is the County's policy to coordinate housing rehabilitation programs with residential energy conservation programs so that the needs of households eligible for energy conservation assistance, but unable to receive it due to structural problems, are addressed.

**Policy 6B6: Financial Assistance for Rehabilitation of Substandard Housing Units**  
**Program Reference(s): 10, 19 and 29-31**

It is the County's policy to utilize to the fullest possible extent state and federal programs that provide financial assistance to rehabilitate substandard housing; additionally, the County shall utilize local revenue sources such



as mortgage revenue bonds and redevelopment tax increment bonds to provide financial assistance to rehabilitate substandard units occupied by low- or moderate-income households.

### **6.3.3 Neighborhood Conservation**

Measures that enhance the quality of residential neighborhoods encourage long-term maintenance of housing. The County has adopted a redevelopment program which will finance neighborhood improvements in Windsor, Roseland and Boyes Hot Springs areas.

#### **Objective 6C: Neighborhood Conservation**

**Implements Goal(s): 8-11 and 28**

It is the County's objective to concentrate the major share of its housing assistance and public improvement activities (including financial assistance for residential rehabilitation, per Policy 6B6) in a limited number of neighborhoods in order to achieve a maximum impact from expenditures. These "target neighborhoods", identified in Figure 2, are: Boyes Hot Springs/El Verano, Roseland/South Wright Road, Bellvue, Windsor, Guerneville/Rio Nido, Graton and Monte Rio.

#### **Policy 6C1: Redevelopment Projects**

**Program Reference(s): 29**

It is the County's policy to establish redevelopment project areas in blighted portions of the Roseland, Windsor, and Boyes Hot Springs communities; at least 20 percent of the tax increment revenues shall be utilized for housing purposes and the remainder for public facility or business improvements that generally benefit the subject areas.

## **7.0 PROVISION OF VARIETY AND CHOICE IN RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS**

Among the many qualities that make Sonoma County a desirable place to live is the wide range of choice in residential living environments. Issued on housing variety and choice fall into three categories:

- choice of residential locations (urban vs. rural)'
- choice of structure types (single family vs. multi-family structures, conventional vs. manufactured construction); and
- choice of tenure forms (ownership vs rental).

### **7.1 Assessment of Housing Variety and Choice**

#### **7.1.1. Choice of Residential Locations**

The unincorporated portion of Sonoma County contains a variety of communities which provide residential settings intermediate between the urban-style neighborhoods of cities such as Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park and Petaluma and rural housing. These unincorporated communities range from Roseland/South Santa Rosa, near the urban end of the spectrum, to very small and sometimes isolated rural communities such as Bloomfield, and Cazadero. In addition, the following communities are designated in the land-use element: Boyes Hot Springs/El Verano./Agua Caliente, Glen Ellen, Kenwood, Larkfield/Wikiup, Windsor, Geyserville, Forestville, Guerneville, Monte Rio, Jenner, Bodega Bay, Bodega, Valley Ford, Freestone, Occidental, Graton, and Penngrove. The land-use element authorized residential uses and densities in these communities which are similar to those of urban areas, along with related commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. Although some "infill" development may occur, the growth potential in the majority of these rural places is limited by densities which may be accommodated with individual septic waste-disposal systems or by the capacities of their small-scale wastewater collection and treatment facilities.



## Target Neighborhoods



The housing site survey data in Section 3.1 show that the development potential of housing sites in unincorporated urban areas totals at least 11,600 units, while the development potential of rural sites (excluding sites in agricultural or timber production areas) totals at least 22,300 units. The total development potential of all identified sites is 33,900 units.

### 7.1.2 Choice of Structure Types

Data from the 1980 Census indicated that nearly three-fourths of all housing units from the unincorporated county were single-family homes, 8.4 percent were mobile homes, and 17.8 percent were in multi-family structures (including duplexes). Data on construction activity since 1980 show that single family dwellings accounted for 78 percent of all new construction, with multi-family units and mobile homes comprising 15 and 7 percent respectively. although the slow rate of multi-family construction between 1980 and 1984 probably reflected the 1981-83 building industry recession, these data suggest that single-family units will continue to comprise a high proportion of all housing units in unincorporated areas.

Data on types of construction (conventional or "stick-built" vs manufactured) are difficult to interpret, since modular units constructed to uniform building code standards are not distinguished from conventionally-constructed units. However, the number of mobile homes installed on private lots has rebounded from a low of 15 in 1982 to 67 in 1983. However, the supply of spaces in mobile home parks has remained relatively static since 1980. The most recent activity involves a 54-space expansion of a park in the Windsor community, which was completed in 1984. The only other mobile home park project under consideration was a proposed 141-space park in the Santa Rosa planning area.

### 7.1.3 Choice of Tenure Types

Data from the 1980 Census show that 67.4 percent of housing units in unincorporated areas were owner-occupied, while 32.6 percent were renter-occupied. The relationship of unit types to tenure can be summarized as follows:

TABLE 7.1: TENURE OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY STRUCTURE TYPE, 1980

Structure Type	Owner Occupied (%)		Renter Occupied (%)		Total (%)	
Mobile Home	3,387	(82.1)	740	(17.9)	4,127	(100.00)
Single Family	27,518	(75.6)	8,880	(24.2)	36,398	(100.00)
Multi-Family	2,327	(26.6)	6,423	(73.4)	8,750	(100.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,232</b>	<b>(67.4)</b>	<b>16,043</b>	<b>(32.6)</b>	<b>49,276</b>	<b>(100.0)</b>

Source: Sonoma County Planning Department, from STF 3A, Bureau of the Census

The need for construction of new rental units over the 1984-90 period is estimated to be approximately 1,800\* units, or about 42 percent of total 1984-90 construction needs (4,355 units). This results in an average annual need for construction of over 300 rental units in unincorporated areas.

- \* Assumes rental housing needs are equal to 80 percent of lower-income and 50% of moderate-income households expected to move to the county, plus existing renter households, minus 1980 rental stock and 1980-84 rental housing construction activity (given that the tenure distribution of new units is the same as that in the 1980 Census for each structure type).

## **7.2 Assuring Housing Variety and Choice: Constraints and Opportunities**

### **7.2.1 Choice of Residential Locations**

Since the market places a high value on rural housing, rural land prices and unit sales prices and rents for otherwise comparable dwellings tend to be higher than in urban areas. High housing costs plus the relative low proportion of rural units that are rentals may constrain consumer choice of residential locations. although lower ownership costs and rents can be achieved through use of manufactured housing or construction under the

Class K ordinance, resulting construction cost savings will not entirely offset the effect of high land costs. Thus, it is unlikely that rural housing will be a realistic option for most low and moderate income households in the future.

Indications are that the development potential on identified rural sites is adequate to accommodate households able to afford rural housing through 2005. Rural housing opportunities could be expanded by increasing the number of housing sites in rural areas, which might encourage lower land prices. However, as pointed out in Section 4.2, an increased supply of rural housing sites would not significantly reduce land prices unless total demand (including speculative demand) were to remain constant or diminish - an assumption not supported by recent trends.

### **7.2.2 Choice of Structure Types**

Data from the 1980 Census show that single-family dwellings and mobile homes comprise 82 percent of all housing units in the unincorporated county. In July 1984, the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco estimated the countywide multi-family vacancy rate at 2%. In 1985 Laventhal-Horwath produced a detailed study of Sonoma County's multiple family housing stock which revealed a vacancy rate of nearly 6 percent. In 1985 Laventhal-Horwath concluded that the multiple family vacancy rate would reach 13 percent by the end of 1986 if all approved multiple family projects are constructed. The foregoing would seem to indicate the market's sensitivity to consumer demand.

Government land-use policies constrain the total number of development potential of housing sites available for multi-family development. But since sites identified in Table 3.2 may not include all existing multi-family sites, and since multi-family development can occur at low (i.e. 1-6 unit/acre) as well as high densities, it is difficult to draw conclusions regarding the adequacy of the current supply. However, adoption of the proposed Windsor Specific Plan, which would increase the development potential of urban sites by 8,865 units, should ensure a more than adequate countywide supply of multi-family housing sites through 2005. However, as noted in Section 3.2, the distribution of urban housing sites among unincorporated planning areas is an issue that should be addressed in future updates of specific plans. The development potential of identified sites can be increased by up to 30 percent through use of the County's density bonus policy.



### 7.2.3 Choice of Tenure or Form of Ownership

It is difficult to assess data on tenure types, since the form of tenure has no direct correlation with structure type. Regardless of ownership form -- in fee, condominium, or cooperative -- a dwelling may be occupied by either its owner or a tenant. While 1980 Census data appear to reflect a healthy range of choice between ownership and rental housing opportunities, this balance is subject to short-term change if existing single or multi-family rentals are sold to owner-occupants. Census data on "single family, attached" units (assumed to include most condominiums) indicate that a remarkably high proportion of these units (76.1%) are rented. This could reflect either:

- the attractiveness of these units as investments for individual investors and their ability to "outbid" households which might otherwise purchase units; or
- High demand for multi-family rentals that is not satisfied by available apartment units; or
- low demand by potential owner-occupants for this form of housing.

Comments of local realtors indicated that all these factors may have been at work in 1984, while data on 1980-84 construction trends indicate that the market is probably not producing enough new rental housing to substantially alter the current range of tenure choices.

Data from subsection 7.1.2 indicate that the total 1984-90 need for new rental housing may be as much as 1,800 units. The demand for additional rental housing may be met by conversions of existing units from owner to renter occupancy and by construction of new rental units. Except for "second units", new construction for rental occupancy is likely to be multi-unit structures. The proposed Windsor Specific Plan, if adopted, would increase the overall development potential of multi-family housing sites to 5,041 units, but would not ensure the construction of rental housing on these sites. Should an acute shortage of rental housing develop, state law (Government Code, Section 66452.50) permits local governments to mandate renter occupancy of condominium units for a maximum of ten years after construction.

An additional non-governmental constraint on the supply of rental housing is the potential for conversion of existing multi-family rental units to condominium ownership. Although state law (Government Code, Section 66452.51) established equitable procedures for such conversions, it is the responsibility of a local government to determine whether the rate and scale of conversions threaten the supply of rental housing to an extent which justifies local controls on conversions. Under the zoning ordinance in effect as of 1984, the County requires a use permit for condominium conversions. Although the number of conversions in unincorporated areas from 1980 to 1984 was small (3 projects, totalling 40 units, plus 1 project of 24 units in progress), rental housing needs warrant monitoring of future conversion proposals.

Another aspect of tenure choice is the availability of spaces in mobile home parks. Data from Subsection 7.1.3 indicate that 82.1 percent of all mobile home units were owner-occupied in 1980, while a January 1984 Planning Department survey indicates that at least 75.2 percent of all mobile homes are in mobile home parks. The mobile home park thus represents a unique tenure situation, in which a unit is typically owned by its occupants, while the land on which it is located is rented from the park owner. The January 1984 survey revealed an overall vacancy rate of 2.5 percent in mobile home parks, indicating that there is considerable demand for park spaces. However, there has been no recent construction of new parks, and little developer interest in such projects. Given recent protests over rents for spaces in existing parks, this suggests that developers do not believe that current market rents for park spaces are sufficient to make development of new parks economically feasible. An opportunity for increasing the number of available spaces and stabilizing space costs is condominium ownership, which would allow mobile home occupants to purchase air rights to a park space.

### **7.3: Housing Variety and Choice: County Objectives and Policies**

#### **7.3.1: Choice of Residential Environments**

Although the current balance of rural and urban housing sites and opportunities appears adequate to accommodate projected demand through 1990, the lack of comprehensive land-use data make the adoption of a specific objective impractical.

##### **Policy 7A1: Choice of Residential Environments** **Program Reference(s): 1 and 2**

It is the County's policy to provide a range of rural and urban housing opportunities by assuring that a sufficient number of sites are designated for residential use; the County's policy emphasizes city and community-centered residential development while discouraging scattered residential uses in agricultural and other resource areas.

#### **7.3.2: Choice of Structure Types**

Building activity data indicate that conventional single-family housing continues to comprise a high proportion (78.1%) of all new residential construction. However, there is a pressing need for affordable housing, which can be most efficiently provided in multi-family structures, or in manufactured single family units. Principal policy issues are the level of multi-family development that should be sought, and the content and application of regulations for manufactured housing.

##### **Objective 7B: Multi-Family Residential Development** **Addresses Goal(s): 5, 6, 7 and 15**

The County shall encourage development of sufficient housing units in multi-family structures in an effort to ensure that such units comprise 30 percent of all residential development over the 1984-90 period (895 multi-family units).

##### **Policy 7B1: Designation of Sites For Multi-Family Housing Development** **Program Reference(s): 1-3**

It is the County's policy in reviewing and updating its specific plans to identify lands that may be suitable for multi-family residential development. All such sites shall be located within urban service areas.

##### **Policy 7B2: Manufactured Housing** **Program Reference(s): 8**

It is the County's policy to encourage construction of manufactured housing on permanent foundations, subject to existing zoning ordinance and design requirements; such housing may be constructed in any area of the county.

#### **7.3.3: Choice of Tenure**

Although home ownership remains an important social objective, it is equally important to accommodate the needs of households that cannot afford to own their homes. In addition, the balance between total supply and total demand in each sector determines the degree of mobility in the housing market, and directly affects housing prices and rents.



**Objective 7C: Housing Tenure**  
**Addresses Goal(s): 5, 6 and 14**

It is the County's objective that the proportion of year-round housing units available for renter occupancy not fall below 1980 levels (33.4%).

**Policy 7C1: Market Orientation of New Residential Development**  
**Program Reference(s): Implementation through existing review procedures.**

It is the County's policy that housing development applications shall identify the segment of the housing market to which their projects are oriented and the intended tenure of proposed units.

**Policy 7C2: Conversions of Housing to Condominium Ownership**  
**Program Reference(s): 8**

Although it is the County's objective to conserve rental housing, the policy shall be not to establish regulatory controls which restrict conversions of rental projects to condominium ownership; the County shall continue to require a use permit for conversion, thus allowing consideration of the potential effects of each proposed conversion on the supply of rental housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

## **8.0 THE SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING PROGRAM: 1984-90**

### **8.1 Evaluation of 1979-83 Program**

Table 8.1 summarizes progress made towards implementation of the 1978-83 housing program, as set forth in the 1978 Housing Element. Evaluation of program accomplishments is complicated by the fact that the County's Community Development Commission administers a variety of programs (including Community Development Block Grants) for all incorporated cities in the County except Santa Rosa. Thus, although Table 8.1 may indicate positive action on a program component, some program activities may not have addressed the housing needs within unincorporated areas. It is not clear whether program targets established in 1978 reflected this administrative issue.

Full achievement of 1978 targets were hindered by several factors:

- high interest rates for construction and purchase financing;
- the effects of the 1981-83 recession on the building industry, and
- the discontinuation of many state and federal housing assistance programs after 1980, as a result of economic conditions or legislative decisions.

In the case of conventional public housing, which must be authorized by voter referendum, the wording of the referendum approved in 1980 precluded use of funds from HUD's conventional public housing program - the sole source of federal funds for such housing.

### **8.2 The 1984-90 Housing Program**

A six-year time frame was selected for the housing program so that the program period would coincide with the 1990 Census. Program objectives are based on conservative estimates of available resources over the program period. Program timeframes reflect fiscal years (July 1 - June 30).

TABLE 8.1: SUMMARY PROGRESS REPORT ON HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION 1978-84

PROGRAM	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	TARGET UNITS: -YEAR 1 -YEAR 1-5	ACTUAL UNITS: -YEAR 1 -YEAR 1-5	COMMENTS
1) Bankable Loans	Housing Conservation	Direct interest subsidy on loans to reduce borrowing cost.	Community Development Block Grant	-27 -150	-13 -47	Plus 38 in cities.
2) Delayed Payment Loans	Housing Conservation	Funds for housing rehabilitation; no monthly payments; 1% interest.	Community Development Block Grant	-15 -150	-9 -47	Plus 43 in cities.
3) Self-Help Rehabilitation	Housing Conservation	Subsidized interest rate and technical assistance	Community Development Block Grant and State Dept. of Housing and Community Development	-19 -300	-43 -140	
4) Inclusionary Zoning	Regulation	Require a percentage of new units to be affordable to low income households	701 Grant	-0 -200	-0 -20	Voluntary density bonus provision in R3 district; cur- rently being revised.
5) Anti-Discrimination Ordinance	Regulation	Preclude rental hous- ing discrimination against families with children.	None	N/A*	N/A*	Accomplished by State Supreme Court ruling.
6) Alternative Building Standards	Regulation	Relax Building Code requirements.	None	-0 -100	-0 -2	Ordinance 2875 adopt- ed 9/15/81; units de- pend on builder applications.
7) Article 34 Referendum	Regulation	Voter approval of local participation housing construction.	None	-0 -400	-0 -0 -400 Pro- jected	Referendum approval by voters in 11/80.
8) Low Cost Housing Economic Development Corporation	Capacity Building	Direct and joint venture participation in building and reha- bilitating housing.	Community Development Block Grant	-0 -250	-0 -0 -70 Pro- jected	Burbank Housing Development Corp- oration.

\*NA = Not Applicable

(Continued)



TABLE 8.1: SUMMARY PROGRESS REPORT ON HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION 1978-84

PROGRAM	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	ACTUAL UNITS: -YEAR 1 -YEAR 1-5	ACTUAL UNITS: -YEAR 1 -YEAR 1-5	COMMENTS
9) CHFA Home Improvement	Housing Conservation	Bond-funded purchase of qualified loans made by local lenders in targeted areas.	CHFA tax-exempt revenue bonds	-0 -100	-0 -0	CHFA reoriented program in 1980.
10) Rental Housing Assistance Program	Housing Conservation	Investment counseling; subsidized interest rate loans; Section 8 assistance; code enforcement.	Community Development Block Grant	-15 -150	-0 -35	34 units funded in cities; counseling and code enforcement not funded by County.
11) Section 312 loans	Housing Conservation	Direct subsidized interest rate loans from HUD through County.	HUD Section 312	-10 -100	-0 -0	County eligibility began in 1981, but program funding mechanism changed.
12) Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation	Housing Conservation	Section 8 rent subsidies to tenants of moderately rehabilitated units.	HUD Section 8	-100 -300	-0 -73	Only 73 units approved by HUD; targets unrealistic.
13) Section 8 Substantial Rehabilitation	Housing Conservation	Section 8 rent subsidies to tenants of substantially rehabilitated units.	HUD Section 8	-0 -100	-0 -0	Program based on private sector applications--none received. Discontinued by federal government in 1981.
14) Housing Finance Bond Feasibility Study	Housing Conservation and New Construction	Sale of local tax-exempt bonds to finance new construction and rehabilitation.	Tax-exempt bonds	-0 -500	-0 -98 -250 Projected	\$20 million bond issue sold in 1983; \$57 million sale planned for 5/84; major participation by city of Santa Rosa.
15) Assisted Housing Site Acquisition	New Construction	Locate, acquire and improve sites for developers and owner-builders of housing for low and moderate income households.	Community Development Block Grant	-60 -400	-0 -0	Never implemented due to insufficient community Development Block Grant funds.

(Continued)

TABLE 8.1: SUMMARY PROGRESS REPORT ON HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION 1978-84

PROGRAM	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	TARGET UNITS: -YEAR 1 -YEAR 1-5	ACTUAL UNITS: -YEAR 1 -YEAR 1-5	COMMENTS
16) Equity Sharing	New Construction	Equity contributions by State from revenue bond proceeds used to assist home purchasers; recapture of equity and appreciation on sale.	State revenue bonds	-0 -100	-0 -0	Target predated state funding criteria; funding subsequently targeted to mobile home park conversions.
17) Owner/Builder Assistance Program	New Construction	Contributions of labor by borrowers of low-interest loans under FMHA Section 502	Farmers' Home Administration Section 502	-10 -50	-12 -28 -12 projected	Funded and on-going.
18) Multi-Family Financing Vehicles	New Construction	HUD and FMHA mortgage and rental assistance programs; CHFA financing and Section 8 set-asides, local tax-exempt bond financing. Technical assistance by staff.	HUD Section 8 and FMHA mortgage and rent assistance programs; CHFA funding; local tax-exempt bonds	-0 -75	-0 -173 -331 projected	CHFA Program based on private sector applications-none received. HUD, FMHA funded completed units; tax-exempt bonds will fund projected units.
19) Housing Services Corporation	Housing Services	Fair housing; emergency shelter; landlord/tenant counseling	Community Development Block Grant; CETA Section 8 Reserves.	N/A*	N/A*	Sonoma County Rental Information and Medication Service (SCRIMS) initiated in 1982 to provide fair housing and rental mediation services; county contracts w/Sonoma County People for Economic Opportunity (SCPEO) for emergency shelter-funded with revenue sharing money.

\*N/A = Not Applicable

DN:HET8.1



### 8.2.1 Overview of Housing Program

Table 8.2 provides summary information on the proposed 1984-90 housing program. Detailed program descriptions are provided in Subsections 8.2.2 - 8.2.6.

### 8.2.2 Programs Related to Housing Supply and Location

#### Program 1: General Plan Update

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description. Objectives of the General Plan Update include:

- revision of the text pertaining to all land-use categories to provide clearer directives as to allowable (and excluded) uses and residential densities, and to clarify policies and standards for new development;
- clarification of County land-use policies and development guidelines for unincorporated areas which lie within city spheres of influence; and
- revision of the land-use map to assure a more exact correspondence between the General Plan, adopted specific plans and zoning.

In addition to addressing basic policy issues such as the location and intensity of new development, these measures should reduce the number of General Plan administrative interpretations and appeals, reduce the caseload of the Planning Department, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, and cut processing times for projects in affected areas by 3-12 weeks.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 3C, 4C, 5B, 5F and 7B

Policy Reference(s): 3A1, 3A2, 3C1, 3C2, 3C3, 4C2, 5B1, 5F1, 7A1 and 7B1

#### Program 2: Specific Plan Updates

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description. Where the Board of Supervisors deems it appropriate, specific plans adopted prior to or during the same year (1978) as the general plan will be updated. Objectives of these updates, and any subsequent updates of other specific plans, will include:

- identification of sites within existing urban service areas suitable for construction of new, moderate-density rental housing;
- evaluation of incentives (eg. density bonuses) for residential development on targeted vacant and underdeveloped sites; and
- consideration of locations where future expansion of urban services areas may be appropriate.

These measures should result in additional sites for moderate-density rental housing and in clarification of existing policies regarding expansion of urban service areas.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 3C, 4C, 5B, 5F and 7B

Policy Reference(s): 3A1, 3A2, 3C1, 3C2, 3C3, 4C2, 5B1, 5F1, 7A1 and 7B1

TABLE 8.2: THE SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING PROGRAM: 1984-90 SUMMARY

Program	Addresses Housing Objective(s)	Target Population(s) and/or Area(s)	Responsible Agency(ies)	Funding Source	Time Frame (fiscal years)	1984-90 Program Objective(s)
(1) General Plan Update	Supply and geographic distribution of housing; production of affordable housing.	Unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1985-87	Adoption of updated General Plan elements.
(2) Specific Plan Updates	Supply and geographic distribution of housing; production of affordable housing.	South Sonoma Valley (Areas 1 & 2), Forestville and Sonoma Mountain.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1986-88	Adoption of updated specific plans.
(3) Urban Land Monitoring Program	Supply and geographic distribution of housing.	Urban service areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1985-86 & ongoing.	Establishment of on-going monitoring program.
(4) Annual Report on Wastewater Management Services	Supply and geographic distribution of housing.	Unincorporated urban service areas.	Planning and Public Works Departments	Dept. budgets	1985-86 & ongoing.	Preparation of annual reports.
(5) Second Dwelling Unit Ordinance and Monitoring Program	Supply and geographic distribution of housing.	Unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1984-85 & ongoing.	Ongoing evaluation of ordinance; continuation of monitoring program.
(6) Community Development Committee	Production of affordable housing.	Low and moderate income households; countywide	Community Development Commission	Agency budget	1984-85 & ongoing.	Input to Board of Supervisors regarding affordable housing production problems and opportunities.
(7) Density Bonus Ordinance and Monitoring Program	Production of affordable housing.	Low and moderate income households; unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1984-85 & ongoing.	Preparation and adoption of ordinance and monitoring of development activity.
(8) Zoning Ordinance Revision	Production of affordable housing.	Unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1985-87	Preparation and adoption of revised Zoning Ordinance.
(9) Subdivision Ordinance Revision	Production of affordable housing.	Unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1985-86	Preparation and adoption of revised Subdivision Ordinance.

(Continued)



TABLE 8.2: THE SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING PROGRAM: 1984-90 SUMMARY

Program	Addresses Housing Objective(s)	Target Population(s) and/or Area(s)	Responsible Agency(ies)	Funding Source	Time Frame (fiscal years)	1984-90 Program Objective(s)
(10) Administration, Coordination, & Financing of Assisted Housing Programs	Production and conservation of affordable housing.	Low- and moderate-income households; countywide (including all cities except Santa Rosa).	Community Development Commission.	Agency budget	1984-85 & ongoing.	Administration and coordination of housing programs, including financing assistance.
(11) Housing Mediation & Referral Services	Elimination of housing discrimination; conservation of affordable rental housing.	Unincorporated Areas.	Sonoma County Rental Information & Mediation Services (SCRIMS)	Agency budget (Community Development Block Grants)	1984-85 & ongoing.	Develop mechanism for rental mediation service in FY 1985-86; continuation of anti-discrimination services.
(12) Coastal Development Guidelines	Conservation of affordable housing.	Low- and moderate-income households; coastal zone.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget	1985-86	Amendment of Coastal Specific Plan to include guidelines for determining the feasibility of replacing affordable housing units proposed for demolition or conversion.
(13) Mortgage Revenue Bond Programs	Production of affordable housing.	Low- and moderate-income households; unincorporated areas.	Community Development Commission.	Revenues from sale of tax-exempt bonds.	1984-90	250 owner-occupied units; 550 multi-family rental units (20% for low & moderate income households)
(14) FmHA Loans (Section 515)	Production of affordable rental housing.	Low- and moderate-income households; unincorporated rural areas.	Community Development Commission.	Agency budget for administration; federal funds for loans.	1985-90	125 multi-family rental units.
(15) Farmworker Housing	Production of affordable farmworker housing.	Farmworker households; unincorporated rural areas.	Community Development Commission.	Agency budget for administration; federal FmHA 514/516 and state Farmworker Grant programs for funding.	1985-90	75 farmworker rental units.
(16) Self-Help Housing Loans	Production of affordable housing.	Low- and moderate-income households; unincorporated rural areas.	Community Development Commission; Burbank Housing Development Corporation.	Agency budgets for administration; FmHA & state Urban & Rural Pre-development Loan programs for loan funds.	1984-90	50 single-family ownership units.
(17) HCD Rental Housing Construction Program	Production of affordable rental housing.	Lower-income, elderly & handicapped renter households.	Community Development Commission.	Agency budget for administration; state HCD funds for loans.	1984-90	80 multi-family rental units.

(Continued)

TABLE 8.2: THE SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING PROGRAM: 1984-90 SUMMARY

Program	Addresses Housing Objective(s)	Target Population(s) and/or Area(s)	Responsible Agency(ies)	Funding Source	Time Frame (fiscal years)	1984-90 Program Objective(s)
(18) HUD Section 8 Rent Subsidies (Existing Housing)	Reduction of excessive housing expenditures.	Lower-income renter households countywide, (including all cities except Santa Rosa).	Community Development Commission.	Federal funds for administration & rent subsidies.	1984-90 & ongoing.	125 rental units (in addition to 1984 existing units).
(19) HUD Section 8 Rent Subsidies (Moderate Rehabilitation)	Reduction of excessive housing expenditures; rehabilitation of substandard units.	Lower-income renter households countywide, except Santa Rosa.	Community Development Commission.	Federal funds for administration, rehabilitation loans & rent subsidies.	1984-85 & ongoing.	60 rental units (in addition to existing units).
(20) HUD Conventional Public Housing	Production of affordable rental housing.	Very low-income renter households; unincorporated areas.	Community Development Commission.	General fund for referendum; agency budget for administration federal funds for construction.	1986-87	40 rental units.
(21) HUD Section 202 Loans	Production of affordable rental housing.	Lower-income elderly & handicapped persons; unincorporated.	Community Development Commission; Burbank Housing Development Corporation.	Agency budget for administration; federal funds for loans & rent subsidies.	1985-90	45 rental units.
(22) HUD Section 8 Rent Subsidies (Aftercare)	Conservation of affordable rental housing.	Handicapped persons; countywide (including Santa Rosa).	Community Development Commission.	Agency budget for administration; state funds for subsidies.	Ongoing.	50 rental units (in addition to existing units).
(23) Abatement of Substandard Farmworker Housing	Conservation of affordable housing; rehabilitation of substandard units.	Farmworker households; unincorporated areas.	Building & Public Health Departments; County Counsel.	Dept. budgets.	1985-86	Clarify code enforcement responsibilities & procedures.
(24) Shared Housing Information Service	Reduction of excessive housing expenditures.	Low- and moderate-income, single parent and elderly households.	Community Development Commission	Agency budget.	1984-85 & ongoing.	Provide information and referral services regarding shared housing opportunities.
(25) Farmworker Housing Needs Assessment	Production of affordable housing.	Farmworker households.	City of Healdsburg; County of Sonoma; Burbank Housing Development Corp.	Community Development Block Grant.	1984-85 & ongoing.	Completion of Healdsburg area study; consideration of similar studies in other areas.
(26) Revision of Anti-Discrimination Language in Contracts & Agreements	Elimination of housing discrimination.	Unincorporated areas.	Community Development Commission; Planning Dept; County Counsel.	Agency budgets.	1984-85	Revise anti-discrimination language to include all forms of discrimination prohibited by state law.

(Continued)

TABLE 8.2: THE SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING PROGRAM: 1984-90 SUMMARY

Program	Addresses Housing Objective(s)	Target Population(s) and/or Area(s)	Responsible Agency(ies)	Funding Source	Time Frame (fiscal years)	1984-90 Program Objective(s)
(27) Emergency Shelter Program	Expansion of emergency shelter facilities.	Homeless persons countywide.	Sonoma County Council of Community Services.	Agency budgets.	1985-90	Add 88 emergency shelter beds countywide; monitor emergency shelter requests.
(28) Code Enforcement	Improvement of housing quality; energy conservation.	Unincorporated areas.	Building & Public Health Depts.	Dept. Budgets.	1984-90 & ongoing	Enforce all adopted health & construction codes.
(29) Redevelopment Projects	Conservation & production of affordable housing; rehabilitation of substandard housing.	Windsor, Roseland & Sonoma Valley Redevelopment Project Areas.	Community Development Commission.	Sale of tax-increment revenue bonds.	1984-90	Conserve, produce & rehabilitate affordable housing; quantified objectives to be determined.
(30) HUD Rental Rehabilitation Program	Conservation of affordable rental housing.	Lower-income renter households countywide (including all cities except Santa Rosa).	Community Development Commission.	Agency budget for administration; federal funds for rehabilitation.	1984-90	165 rental units.
(31) Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation of substandard housing.	Lower-income households; targeted unincorporated areas.	Community Development Commission.	Community Development Block Grants.	1984-90	175 units.
(32) Design Review Manual	Housing production; neighborhood conservation.	Unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget.	1984-85	Preparation & publication of manual providing design review guidelines.
(33) Solar Access Ordinance	Energy conservation.	Unincorporated areas.	Planning Dept.	Dept. budget.	1985-86	Preparation & adoption of ordinance permitting dedication of solar easements.



**Program 3: Urban Land Monitoring Program**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description: this program has many objectives, two of which relate to housing: 1) identification of the number, location and development potential of all vacant housing sites in urban service areas, including surplus government-owned property; and 2) maintenance of the resulting data base by monitoring the location of residential development approvals. As funds are available, land-use surveys needed to identify housing sites will be conducted in conjunction with specific plan updates. Data collected will be stored and updated using the Planning Department's microcomputer. These measures will enable staff to prepare evaluations of existing and projected housing, infrastructure and public service needs in relation to available sites. IN addition, the program will provide a useful source of information for housing developers in reviewing and selecting potential sites.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 3C, 4B, 4C and 7B

Policy Reference(s): 3A1, 3A2, 3C1, 3C2, 3C3, 4B3, 4C2 and 7B1

**Program 4: Annual Report on Wastewater Management Services**

Responsible Agencies: Planning and Public Works Departments

Program Description: Although the County's adopted specific plans contain evaluations of public service needs, few contain detailed assessments of projected housing growth in relation to sewage collection treatment and disposal capacities and these are not updated on a regular basis. This program would compile and maintain the following data on facilities in each sanitation district which is located within the unincorporated portion of the county:

- dry weather design capacity;
- average daily dry weather flows;
- wet weather design capacity;
- average daily wet weather flows
- storage capacity; and
- effluent disposal capacity
- district boundaries and sphere of influence

These data will be compared with projections of housing needs in each urban service area, providing an annual overview of the ability of each area to accommodate growth.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 3C and 4C

Policy Reference(s): 3A1, 3A2, 3C1, 3A3 and 4C2

**Program 5: Second Dwelling Unit Ordinance and Monitoring Program**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description: In December 1983 the County adopted a Second Dwelling Unit Ordinance which permits conversion or new construction of attached or detached second dwelling units, not exceeding 840 square feet in area, in most residential and agricultural zoning districts. After one year of operation, during which more than 200 applications were processed, the ordinance was reviewed by the Board of Supervisors in mid-1985; modifications of ordinance provisions reduced the maximum size of such units to 640 square feet, prohibited

their construction in the Exclusive Agriculture zoning district and on parcels of two acres or less without water and sewer service, and made other changes in development standards and application procedures. This program includes preparation of future and further ordinance amendments authorized by the Board, evaluation of proposed amendments for potential effects on second unit production costs and affordability, and monitoring the location and potential public service impacts of second unit permit requests.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A and 3C

Policy Reference(s): 3A1 and 3C1

### **8.2.3. Programs Related to Housing Production Costs and Affordable Housing**

#### **Program 6: Community Development Committee**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description. The Community Development Committee, composed of one appointee from each supervisorial district, plus two Housing Authority tenants, currently reviews and makes recommendations on matters coming before the Board of Supervisors and the Community Development Commission. the intent of this program is to expand the responsibilities of the Committee to include monitoring the implementation of the 1984-90 Housing Program. This would entail discussion of and response to:

- (a) possible cuts in state or federal programs cited in the 1984-90 Housing Program; and
- (b) possible new opportunities for housing production, rehabilitation or conservation that may arise during the 1985-86 program period.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, 5A, 5C and 5F

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 4C4, 5A1 and 5F1

#### **Program 7: Density Bonus Ordinance and Monitoring Program.**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department and Community Development Commission

Program Description. This program will include preparation of a zoning ordinance amendment incorporating provisions of the density bonus policy set forth in Section 4.4.1 (Policy 4A1), and the establishment of a monitoring system to track the number and locations of residential projects producing affordable housing. The program will establish maximum rents to be charged for the affordable units in rental projects based upon the percentage of bonus units granted. It will also establish maximum sales prices for the affordable units in an ownership project based upon the percentage of bonus units granted. These measures should increase the production of affordable units and facilitate future evaluations of the effectiveness of the bonus in increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A and 4A

Policy Reference(s): 3A1, 4A1 and 4A2

**Program 8: Zoning Ordinance Revision**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description: A comprehensive review of the County Zoning Ordinance is now in progress. This program will add the following components to the revision effort:

- a review where appropriate of the proposed provisions of the revised ordinance indicating estimated impacts on housing production cost; and
- an assessment of the production cost impacts of certain provisions of the existing ordinance, including density limits and use permit requirements for condominium projects and development incentives for congregate housing.

Addresses Objective(s): 4A, 4C, 5B, 7B and 7C

Policy Reference(s): 4A1, 4A2, 4A3, 4A5, 4A6, 4C2, 5B1, 7B2 and 7C2

**Program 9: Subdivision Ordinance Revision**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description: A comprehensive revision of the County Subdivision Ordinance is now in progress. This program will include a discussion of the impacts of proposed ordinance revisions on housing production costs.

Addresses Objective(s): 4A

Policy Reference(s): 4A2, 4A3, 4A5 and 4A6

**Program 10: Administration and Coordination of Assisted Housing Programs**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: Commission staff currently administer all County-sponsored housing assistance programs, and provide administrative services to all cities in the county except Santa Rosa for the following programs:

- the Community Development Block Grant program;
- the mortgage revenue bond programs; and
- the Section 8 rent subsidy program.

This program component of the Housing Element would delegate these responsibilities to the Commission - as funds permit - over the 1984-90 program period.

Addresses Objective(s): 4B, 5F, 5G and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 4B1, 4B2, 4B5, 5F1, 5G1, 6B1, 6B5 and 6B6

**Program 11: Housing Mediation and Referral Services**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Rental Information and Mediation Services (SCRIMS)

Program Description. Currently, SCRIMS provides voluntary mediation and referral services in cases of alleged housing discrimination and for tenant-landlord disputes. This program will expand these services by adding



voluntary non-binding mediation in cases of rent increases alleged to exceed increase in the cost of owning and maintaining rental property. Implementation of this service will require the preparation of guidelines to determine the types of rental housing to be covered, and the circumstances under which voluntary mediation services will be provided. An important component of the program would involve notification to appropriate apartment or mobile home park owners' associations of all reported instances of excessive rent increases. Although the mediation process would be voluntary and non-binding for landlords, the desired effect is that notification of owners' association will encourage self-policing by the rental housing industry, and discourage the worst instances of excessive rent increases.

Addresses Objective(s): 4C and 5D

Policy Reference(s): 4C3 and 5D1

#### **Program 12: Coastal Development Guidelines**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description: The Coastal Specific Plan, adopted in 1980, requires replacement of low- and moderate-income housing units that are demolished, and prohibits condominium conversions unless they provide a "greater affordable housing opportunity". State legislation, adopted in 1982, contains similar provisions subject to four broadly-worded exemptions. However, the exemptions are inoperable if the local government determines that replacement is "feasible". This program would establish guidelines for determining the feasibility of replacing low- and moderate-income units proposed for demolition or conversion.

Addresses Objective(s): 4A

Policy Reference(s): 4A7

#### **Program 13: Mortgage Revenue Bond Program**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development commission

Program Description. Proceeds from the sale of tax-exempt mortgage revenue bonds will continue to be used to:

- provide home loans to qualified home purchasers at interest rates up to three percentage points below prevailing market rates. Eligibility is limited to households with incomes less than 150 percent of the County median that have not owned a home within the last three years. Only new constructed units are eligible for financing, with maximum sales prices limited by a formula based on the median sales price of new homes in the County.
- provide construction and/or permanent financing for rental housing at interest rates up to three percentage points below prevailing market rates. At least 20 percent of the units produced must be occupied by low- and moderate-income households for a period of ten years.

The Community Development Commission administers the mortgage revenue bond programs for the county and all incorporated cities except Santa Rosa. Two bond issues for owner-occupied housing, totalling \$76,670,200 were sold over the 1983-83 period. The unincorporated county's share of bond revenues will finance about 77 units. A \$12-13 million dollar bond issue for rental housing will be marketed in early 1985; this issue should provide financing for additional multi-family rental units in the unincorporated county. This program will provide for continuing administration of revenue bond activities, including the provision of technical assistance to cities, over the 1984-90 program period.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4C, 5A, 5E and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4C1, 5A1, 5E2 and 6B3

**Program 14: Farmers' Home Administration (FmHA) Loans (Section 515)**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description. This FmHA program provides construction and permanent financing for multi-family rental housing for low- and moderate-income households in designated rural areas. Interest rates can be as low as one percent but all units financed must be occupied by lower-income households. Eligible rural areas in unincorporated portions of the county include Windsor, the Russian River area, Geyserville, the Sonoma Valley and coastal areas.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, 5A and 5E

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 5A1, 5E2 and 6B3

**Program 15: Farmworker Housing**

Responsible Agencies: Sonoma County Community Development Commission and  
Burbank Housing Development Corporation

Program Description: This program will use funding from two sources:

- The FMHA Section 514/516 program provides a combination of grants and loans to finance construction, rehabilitation or acquisition of rental housing for farmworkers in designated rural areas (see Program 14). A grant of up to 90% of the cost of a project is made, with the remainder loaned at 1% interest. Loans are repaid over a 33-year term.
- The State Farmworker Grant program provides funds for land acquisition and site improvements to non-profit and governmental agencies.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, 5E, 5F and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 5E2, 5F1, 6B3, 6B4 and 6B5

**Program 16: Farmers' Home Administration (FmHA) Self-Help Housing Loans**

Responsible Agencies: Community Development commission and Burbank Housing Development Corporation

Program Description. This FmHA program provides construction and purchase financing for owner-built and -occupied housing in designated rural areas (see Program 14). Loans are available at rates as low as one percent to lower income households, who provide most construction labor under the supervision of technical advisers. Since most projects are initiated by non-profit sponsors, developer profit and overhead costs are eliminated. Labor contributed by assisted households constitutes the down payment; mortgages, as of 1984, cannot exceed \$55,000.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 5E, 5F and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 5E2, 5F1 and 6B3



**Program 17: HCD Rental Housing Construction Program**

Responsible Agencies: Sonoma County Community Development Commission and Burbank Housing Development Corporation

Program Description: This program, administered by the state Department of Housing and Community Development, provides grants and loans for the development of rental housing. Program limitation include:

- 30 percent or more of the units in each project must be reserved for occupancy by very low- or lower-income households;
- two-thirds or more of assisted units must be reserved for occupancy by very low-income households;
- between 20 and 30 percent of total units assisted by the program must be reserved for occupancy by elderly or handicapped households; and
- 20 percent or more of total units assisted by the program must be located in rural areas.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, 5A, 5E, 5C and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 5C1, 5E2, and 6B3

**Program 18: HUD Section 8 Rent Subsidies (Existing Housing)**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: This program provides rent subsidies to very low-income households which make up the difference between the "fair market rent" of a unit (as determined by HUD) and each household's "affordable" rent (30 percent of household income).

Addresses Objective(s): 4C, 5E and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 4C4, 5E2 and 6B3

**Program 19: HUD Section 8 Rent Subsidies (Moderate Rehabilitation)**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: This program encourages rehabilitation of rental units by increasing the "fair market rent" of a unit following rehabilitation. Units are then occupied by very low-income households, whose rents are subsidized as described under Program 19 (Section 8 Existing Housing).

Addresses Objective(s): 4C, 5E, and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 4C4, 5E2, 6B3, 6B4, 6B5 and 6B6

**Program 20: HUD Conventional Public Housing/Referendum**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: Article 34 of the California Constitution requires voter approval of a referendum before a local government can build and own public housing for very low-income renter households. Sonoma County voters approved such a referendum for 400 housing units in 1980, but the wording of the referendum precluded use of funds from HUD programs, which are the principal source of funding for public housing projects. This program would result in a new referendum without the funding limitations of the 1980 ballot measure.



Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, 5A, 5E, 5F and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 4C4, 5A1, 5E2, 5F1 and 6B3

#### **8.2.4 Programs Related to Distribution of Housing Services**

##### **Program 21: HUD Section 202 Loans**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: This program provides low-interest financing (as of 1984 - 9.25%) for the construction of non-profit rental housing for elderly and handicapped households, and provides rent subsidies for eligible residents.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, and 5A

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 4C4 and 5A1

##### **Program 22: HUD Section 8 Rent Subsidies (Aftercare)**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: A portion of Section 8 funds administered by the Community Development Commission are reserved for households with handicapped members. Other than this eligibility restriction, the operation of the program is the same as Section 8 Existing Housing (see Program 19).

Addresses Objective(s): 4C

Policy Reference(s): 4C4

##### **Program 23: Abatement of Substandard Farmworker Housing**

Responsible Agencies: Building and Public Health Departments; County Counsel

Program Description: As discussed in Subsection 5.2.5, the circumstances under which County employees may enter and inspect farmworker housing under county jurisdiction require clarification. This program would identify alternatives for the enforcement of existing health, housing and construction codes.

Addresses Objective(s): 5F, 6A, and 6B

Policy Reference(s): 5F2, 6A1, 6B2 and 6B3

##### **Program 24: Shared Housing Information Service**

Responsible Agency: Community Development Commission

Program Description: The Commission currently provides a message board service for persons seeking shared housing opportunities. This program consists of the continued provision of this service.

Addresses Objective(s): 4B

Policy Reference(s): 4B1

**Program 25: Farmworker Housing Needs Assessment**

Responsible Agencies: City of Healdsburg, County of Sonoma, Burbank Housing Development Corporation

Program Description: The County is co-sponsoring a study of farmworker housing needs with the City of Healdsburg; the Burbank Housing Development Corporation has been retained to prepare the study. Although this effort focuses on the Healdsburg area, it should serve as the basis for similar assessments in other areas of the County. The purpose of these efforts should be to identify means for insuring the production of affordable farmworker housing.

Addresses Objective(s): 5F

Policy Reference(s): 5F1 and 5F3

**Program 26: Revision of Housing Discrimination Language in Contracts and Agreements**

Responsible Agencies: Planning Department and Community Development Commission

Program Description. As discussed in Subsection 5.2.3, the standard language regarding housing discrimination in County contracts and development agreements does not include all forms of discrimination prohibited by state law. This program would revise the standard language to prohibit housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, age (except in mobile home parks and senior citizen housing developments as defined by state law), marital status, disease or handicaps.

Addresses Objective(s): 5D

Policy Reference(s): 5D1

**Program 27: Emergency Shelter Program**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Council of Community Services

Program Description. As discussed in Subsection 5.1.7, available data indicate that there is a severe shortage of emergency shelter beds. However, these data are from 1983 and do not reflect current economic conditions. In addition, there is no program for monitoring emergency shelter needs on an ongoing basis. This program would include:

- preparation of proposals for expanding the current supply of emergency shelter beds, as expressed in Objective 5.7; and
- establishment of an annual monitoring program by the Council to tabulate peak-month requests for emergency shelter received by member agencies.

Addresses Objective(s): 5G

Policy Reference(s): 5G1

## **8.2.5 Programs Related to Housing Quality**

### **Program 28: code Enforcement**

Responsible Agencies: Building and Public Health Departments

Program Description: These agencies currently enforce adopted health and construction codes. This program consists of the ongoing inspection and resolution of all reported cases of substandard housing.

Addresses Objective(s): 5F, 6A, 6B and 6C

Policy Reference(s): 5F2, 5F3, 6B1, 6B3 and 6B6

### **Program 29: Redevelopment Projects**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: The County has recently designated three redevelopment project areas - Roseland, Windsor and Boyes Hot Springs, which contain a total of 1,850 dwelling units. State law mandates that 20 percent of tax increment funds generated by redevelopment be used to address the needs of low- and moderate-income households. These funds may be used for rehabilitation of existing housing, site acquisition, construction of new housing units, and construction of streets, curbs, sidewalks and other public facility improvements. This program includes the administration of redevelopment plans, funds and housing assistance and neighborhood conservation programs in project areas.

Addresses Objective(s): 3A, 4B, 4C, 6B, and 6C

Policy Reference(s): 3A3, 4B4, 4C1, 6B3, 6B4, 6B5, 6B6, and 6C1

### **Program 30: HUD Rental Rehabilitation**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Program Description: The HUD program provides up to 50 percent of the funds needed to rehabilitate substandard rental units, in exchange for making rehabilitated units available for very low- and lower-income households receiving Section 8 rent subsidies.

Addresses Objective(s): 6B

Policy Reference(s): 6B4, 6B5, and 6B6

### **Program 31: Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation**

Responsible Agency: Sonoma County Community Development commission

Program Description: The County currently provides rehabilitation loans and grants to lower-income households living in substandard units in specific unincorporated areas. These activities are financed by CDBG funds, so the county has more discretion regarding their use than is possible with the categorical state and federal programs. Rehabilitation target areas have included Roseland, El Verano, South Wright Road, the Blackwell Tract, Windsor and the Russian River area. This program provides for the continued origination and administration of rehabilitation grants and loans over the 1984-90 program period.



Addresses Objective(s): 6B and 6c

Policy Reference(s): 6B4, 6B5 and 6B6

**Program 32: Design Review Manual**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description: The County's existing design review process is intended, in part, to:

- prevent community deterioration and encourage the preservation and enhancement of property values and the visual character of communities; and to
- encourage development in harmony with the desired character of unincorporated areas and communities in conformance with adopted community design principles, the County general plan and specific plans.

This program consists of preparation and adoption of a manual describing design review procedures and requirements. The manual will enable residential developers to incorporate desired features into project plans early in the development process, reducing plan processing delays. to the extent that the program shortens construction periods, it should reduce construction financing costs, thereby lowering housing sales prices and rents.

Addresses Objective(s): 4A and 6A

Program Reference(s): 4A2 and 6A3

**Program 33: Solar Access Ordinance**

Responsible Agency: Planning Department

Program Description. As discussed in Subsection 6.2.1, state law allows the county to adopt an ordinance providing for the dedication of solar access easements as a condition of approval of subdivision maps. This program will result in the preparation of a solar access ordinance as authorized by state law.

Addresses Objective(s): 6A

Policy Reference(s): 6A2









**OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California 95403**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

State law recognizes that open space land is a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved wherever possible. The element must address open space for the preservation of natural resources, for the managed production of resources, for outdoor recreation, and for public health and safety.

The purpose of the Open Space Element is to preserve the natural and scenic resources which contribute to the general welfare and quality of life for the residents of the county and to the maintenance of its tourism industry. This element provides the guidelines for making necessary consistency findings and includes an implementation program, as required by law.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Open Space Element is coordinated with the Public Safety, Public Facilities, Agricultural Resources and Resource Conservation Elements. Figure OS-1 on page 174 illustrates the relationship between these elements. The Land Use element reinforces the policies of this element and is consistent with the preservation of open space lands.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

The Open Space Element has three major components, a policy framework for the preservation of open space lands, an open space map for each planning area identifying lands subject to the various policies, and an implementation program.

There are four classifications of open space - scenic resources, biotic resources, outdoor recreation, and archaeological/historical resources.

## **2.0 SCENIC RESOURCES**

The unique quality of Sonoma County results from the attractiveness and diversity of its landscape. The scenic resources component includes three open space categories, community separators, scenic landscape units, and scenic highway corridors. Figure OS-2 on page 175 shows these scenic resource areas.

### **2.1 POLICY FOR COMMUNITY SEPARATORS**

A characteristic which distinguishes Sonoma County from many parts of the San Francisco Bay Area is the continued existence of separate, identifiable cities and communities. Some land areas need to remain open or retain a rural character in order to avoid corridor-style urbanization. These lands may not necessarily be highly scenic in their own right, but provide visual relief from continuous urbanization and are a special type of scenic border -- a community separator. They are frequently subject to pressure for development because they are close to developed areas and major roads. Many property owners are concerned that open space policies may affect their property values.

The following eight areas have been identified as community separators:

- 1) Petaluma/Novato. Approximately 1200 acres are designated to retain open space between Petaluma and the Marin County line. Dominant features include rolling hills with trees and farms located along the valley floor. Additional commercial development would detract from this rural atmosphere.

Figure OS-1

# OPEN SPACE PLAN CONCEPTS

## LEGAL REQUIREMENT

## GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT

## MAPPED DESIGNATION / OTHER POLICIES

Open Space for  
PRESERVATION OF  
NATURAL  
RESOURCES

Land-Use Element

• Natural Resource Conservation Areas

• Other Policies

Resource Conservation Element

• Groundwater Recharge Areas

• Rare or Endangered Species

• Other Policies

Open Space Element

• Biotic Resource Conservation Areas

• Protected Natural Riparian Areas

• Modified Natural Riparian Areas

• Other Policies

Open Space for  
MANAGED  
PRODUCTION  
OF RESOURCES

Land-Use Element

• Agricultural Use Categories (3)

• Timberland Areas

• Geothermal and Mineral Resource Areas

Resource Conservation Element

• Groundwater Availability Classifications

• Other Policies: Soil, Water, Fishery,  
Geothermal, Mineral Resources

Agricultural Resources Element

• Other Policies: Agricultural Production Areas

Open Space for  
OUTDOOR  
RECREATION

Public Facilities Element

• Public Parks

• Other Policies: Parklands

Open Space Element

• Parks

• Trails: Equestrian, Hiking, Waterways

• Bikeways

• Scenic Resource Areas: Community Separators  
Scenic Landscape Units, Scenic Highways

• Other Policies: Historic and Cultural Resources

Land-Use Element

• Other Policies:

Open Space for  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
& SAFETY

Safety Element

• Alquist-Philo Fault Zones

• Other Potentially Active Fault Zones

• Other Seismic Hazard Areas

• Areas with Slope Instability

• Flood Hazard Areas

• Wildland Fire Hazard Areas

• Other Policies

Land-Use Element

• Other Policies

Open Space Element

• Other Policies









- 2) Petaluma/Rohnert Park. This separator between Petaluma, Penngrove and Rohnert Park/Cotati includes Liberty Valley, one of the outstanding views in the county. Development on existing rural residential lots would be intrusive unless properly sited and screened. About 3360 acres have been designated within this separator.
- 3) Rohnert Park/Santa Rosa. Approximately 1700 acres between Rohnert Park and Santa Rosa are designated in order to retain an open space break between these cities. Large parcels along Stony Point Road and Petaluma Hill Road create relief from the urban area and provide views of fields and hills. Rural development now limits the visual separation, but urban development along this corridor would block views of the mountains and create a more intense urban form. Planting around any new structures would help maintain the rural character.
- 4) Santa Rosa/Sebastopol. While some "strip development" exists along the Highway 12 corridor between Santa Rosa and Sebastopol, scenic views of the Laguna de Santa Rosa, oak studded pastures and Mt. St. Helena are available. Approximately 1400 acres are designated to maintain the visual separation between these cities. Retention of the existing oak woodlands and riparian vegetation is critical to the scenic value of this area.
- 5) Windsor/Larkfield/Santa Rosa. This 2000 acre separator provides an open space break along the Highway 101 and Old Redwood Highway corridors between Santa Rosa, Larkfield-Wikiup, and Windsor. Significant views are available to the west across fields and vineyards to the Mendocino Highlands and to the east over the Mark West Springs Hills to Mt. St. Helena. Development in the area may significantly reduce rural quality.
- 6) Windsor/Healdsburg. Approximately 1200 acres along the Highway 101 corridor would be retained as open space to prevent Windsor and Healdsburg from merging. Screening of future development in the rolling hills to the east of the freeway would maintain scenic quality in this area.
- 7) Northeast Santa Rosa. This 3500 acre separator extends along Highway 12 near the Oakmont community and follows the ridgeline above Rincon Valley northwest of Calistoga Road. Included in this area are scattered rural residential development and open oak woodlands. Urban encroachment in the hillside areas and valley floor would detract from the visual quality.
- 8) Glen Ellen/Agua Caliente. Approximately 1400 acres between Glen Ellen and Agua Caliente/Boyes Hot Springs are designated to separate these urban areas. Highway 12, extending through the Valley of the Moon, provides expansive views of the Sonoma-Napa mountains and vineyard covered hillsides. Intense development along the valley floor and mountainsides would lessen the scenic quality in this area.

Past County policy for these separator lands has varied. In some areas, development rights on a portion of some sites were given in return for open space easements on the remainder. Elsewhere, development has been approved on individual parcels. Uniform standards for each community separator would define the types and intensity of uses which are desired to retain these lands in an open manner with very low intensity of development.

**Goal OS-1** Preserve the visual identities of communities by maintaining open space areas between cities and communities.

**Objective OS-1.1:** Preserve important open space areas in the community separators shown on Figures OS-5a through OS-5i of the Open Space Element.

**Objective OS-1.2:** Retain a rural character and promote low intensities of development in community separators. Avoid their annexation or inclusion in spheres of influence for sewer and water service providers.

**Objective OS-1.3:** Provide opportunities for consideration of additional development in community separators in exchange for permanent open space preservation and other overriding public benefits.

**Objective OS-1.4:** Preserve existing specimen trees and tree stands within community separator areas.

The County shall use the following policies in addition to those in the Land Use Element to accomplish the above objectives:

**OS-1a:** Avoid amendments to increase residential density in community separators, since these densities were established based upon the policies set forth in other elements of this plan as well as the open space, separation and visual considerations identified in this section. The integrity of community separators cannot be maintained at densities in excess of one unit per ten acres. However, under no circumstances shall this policy be used to justify an increase in density from that designated on the land use map.

**OS-1b:** Avoid commercial or industrial uses in community separators other than those which are permitted by the agricultural or resource land use categories, except as may be authorized by policy OS-1c below. Consider amendments for outdoor recreational or other uses with a low intensity of structures only in those community separators along the Highway 101 Corridor.

**OS-1c:** Notwithstanding policies OS-1a, OS-1b, LU-5c, the policies of the Agricultural Resources and Public Facilities Elements, and the densities set forth on the land use map, the Board of Supervisors may, through a development agreement or other appropriate mechanism, allow additional or varied development within community separators on a case by case basis if, at a minimum, the following criteria are met:

- 1) permanent open space preservation is provided through open space grants to the County and/or third party land trust.
- 2) development is clustered, concentrated or located to maintain the visual quality of the separator.
- 3) in addition to providing permanent open space preservation, the development includes other public benefits which equal or outweigh the impacts of placing such development within the separator.
- 4) the development is accompanied by a visual analysis which demonstrates that the development either is not detrimental to or, in fact, enhances the visual quality of the separator as a whole.
- 5) adequate additional public services and infrastructure are available to serve the development.
- 6) the development is compatible with surrounding properties, especially those used for agricultural pursuits.
- 7) where open space grants are offered by way of easement as opposed to fee title, the development proposal includes a landscaping and maintenance plan which retains or enhances the visual integrity of the permanent open space.

In addition to the mandatory criteria set forth above, special consideration will be given to projects which incorporate one or more of the following:

- 1) aggregation of parcels within the separator to achieve a project design which enhances the separator as a whole.
- 2) creative developer/city/county financing mechanisms to maintain and preserve open space or parkland which may be dedicated in fee as part of the proposed development.
- 3) project design features which provide for pedestrian or bicycle links between the communities on either side of the separator and to any parkland which may be dedicated in fee as part of the proposed development.

Nothing set forth in this policy shall require the Board of Supervisors to allow this additional development in community separators. Development, if any, proposed pursuant to this policy may be allowed after public hearing if the Board, in its sole discretion, determines that the proposed development is desirable for the community as a whole and is otherwise consistent with the General Plan and the criteria set forth above.

**OS-1d:** Apply the Scenic Resources combining district consistent with this element to all lands located within a community separator.



**OS-1e:** Require that new structures meet the following criteria:

- 1) they are sited below exposed ridgelines.
- 2) they use natural landforms and existing vegetation to screen them from view from public roads. On exposed sites, screening with native, fire retardant plants may be required.
- 3) cuts and fills are discouraged and where practical, driveways are screened from public view.
- 4) utilities are undergrounded where economically practical.

Exempt agricultural accessory structures from this policy if their use does not require a use permit in the zoning ordinance. If compliance with these standards would make a parcel unbuildable, site structures where minimum visual impacts would result.

**OS-1f:** Use the following standards in addition to those of Policy OS-1e for subdivisions in community separators:

- 1) establish building envelopes for structures. Consider use of height limitations if necessary to further mitigate visual impacts.
- 2) use clustering to reduce visual impact where consistent with the land use element.
- 3) locate building sites and roadways to preserve significant existing tree stands and significant oak trees.
- 4) to the extent allowed by law, require dedication of a permanent scenic or agricultural easement at the time of subdivision.

**OS-1g:** Initiate an implementation program for community separator areas.

**OS-1h:** Consider placing on the ballot a measure which would establish an Open Space District for the purpose of acquiring and administering open space lands, including an appropriate method of financing.

**OS-1i:** Consider voluntary transfer of development rights (TDR) and purchase of development rights (PDR) programs and make community separators eligible with owner consent.

## 2.2 POLICY FOR SCENIC LANDSCAPE UNITS

Coastal bluffs, vineyards, San Pablo Bay, the Laguna de Santa Rosa and other landscapes are of special importance to Sonoma County. Preservation of these scenic resources is important to the quality of life of County residents and the tourists and agricultural economy. Other features such as the Mayacamas and Sonoma Mountains provide scenic backdrops to communities. As the county urbanizes, maintenance of the openness of these areas provides important visual relief from urban densities. These landscapes have little capacity to absorb very much development without significant visual impact.

Major scenic landscape units have been identified as follows:

- 1) **The Coast.** The Sonoma coast is a scenic resource vital to the county. Three basic types of landscapes are included -- the flat terraces south of the Russian River, the more hilly terraces from Fort Ross northward, and the cliffs and landslide area between.
- 2) **Oat Valley.** Oat Valley and the hillsides above it provide the scenic northern entrance to the county near Cloverdale.
- 3) **Alexander and Dry Creek Valleys.** Protection of these agricultural valleys' scenic beauty is not only important from an aesthetic standpoint, but also from an economic one as agricultural marketing is closely tied to the area's scenic image. The hills along Highway 101 and above the valley floor are particularly sensitive.
- 4) **Hills east of Windsor.** These hills provide a scenic backdrop to the Santa Rosa Plain. North of Windsor the area extends into the plain and adjoins the low, rolling hills which form part of the Healdsburg-Windsor Community Separator.

- 5) Eastside Road. This area of rolling hills is an important transition between the community of Windsor and the rich agricultural and mineral resource areas of the Russian River Valley.
- 6) River Road. This area provides a variety of landscapes, including valleys planted in vineyards, orchard covered hillsides, and redwood groves adjacent to the Russian River.
- 7) Laguna de Santa Rosa. This area consists primarily of the scenic lowlands and floodplain around the Laguna de Santa Rosa marsh, swamp and riparian forest. It also includes hills between Forestville, Sebastopol and Meacham Hill. It defines the eastern boundary of Sebastopol and associated rural residential development.
- 8) Bennett Valley. Bennett Mountain forms a scenic backdrop from Bennett Valley Road. This area defines Santa Rosa's southeastern boundary and also abuts Annadel State Park.
- 9) Highway 116. The view corridor along Highway 116 contains unique views of orchards, redwood groves, and the Russian River. This area also defines the community boundaries of Forestville, Guerneville, and Monte Rio and their adjacent rural residential development.
- 10) Atascadero Creek. This area consists primarily of the lowlands and floodplains along Atascadero Creek and the hills along Occidental Road. The area defines the western boundary of Sebastopol and its adjacent rural residential development, separates Sebastopol and Graton, and creates a visual connection to the Laguna de Santa Rosa.
- 11) Coleman Valley. The Coleman Valley Road area contains unique views of forests, canyons, grazing lands, and the ocean.
- 12) Sonoma Mountains. These are highly valuable scenic lands, clearly defining the eastern edge of the Santa Rosa plain between Petaluma and Sonoma. They provide an important backdrop to the urban valley.
- 13) Hills south of Petaluma. The open grassy hillsides and ridgelines of the area are extremely sensitive. Located at the Marin County border, this area serves as a gateway to the county.
- 14) Sonoma Valley. Included in this area are the Sonoma-Napa Mountains which provide a backdrop to the valley and agricultural areas bordering the valley. These areas define the boundaries of the urban and rural communities and are very sensitive because of their small size and the unobstructed view of them from roads and adjoining urban areas.
- 15) South Sonoma Mountains. These hillsides are an important part of the South County landscape with a simple landform, minimal vegetation, and a clear widespread viewing area. Pasture and forage lands along the Highway 37 corridor are included to preserve views of the San Pablo Bay.

**Goal OS-2 Retain the largely open, scenic character of important scenic landscape units.**

**Objective OS-2.1:** Retain a rural, scenic character in scenic landscape units with very low intensities of development. Avoid their inclusion within spheres of influence for public service providers.

**Objective OS-2.2:** Provide opportunities for consideration of additional development in scenic landscape units in exchange for permanent open space preservation.

**The following policies in addition to those of the Land Use Element shall be used to accomplish the above objectives:**

**OS-2a:** Avoid amendments to increase residential density in scenic landscape units in excess of one unit per ten acres. The land use plan may designate a lower density or larger minimum lot size.



**OS-2b:** Avoid commercial or industrial uses in scenic landscape units other than those which are permitted by the agricultural or resource land use categories.

**OS-2c:** Notwithstanding policies OS-2a and LU-8a and the densities set forth on the land use map, the Board of Supervisors may, through a development agreement or other appropriate mechanism, allow additional residential development within scenic landscape units on a case by case basis if, at a minimum, the following criteria are met:

- 1) Permanent open space preservation is provided through open space grants to the County and/or third party land trust.
- 2) Development is clustered, concentrated or located to maintain the visual quality of the area.
- 3) In addition to providing permanent open space preservation, the development includes other public benefits which equal or outweigh the impacts of placing such development within the scenic landscape unit.
- 4) The development is accompanied by a visual analysis which demonstrates that the development either is not detrimental to or, in fact, enhances the visual quality of the area.
- 5) Adequate additional public services and infrastructure are available to serve the development.
- 6) The development is compatible with surrounding properties, especially those used for agricultural pursuits.
- 7) The development does not require urban level services.
- 8) To the extent possible, the development is consistent with the policies set forth in the Agricultural Resources Element.

In addition to the mandatory criteria stated above, special consideration will be given to projects which incorporate one or more of the following:

- 1) aggregation of parcels within the scenic landscape unit to achieve a project design which visually enhances the area.
- 2) creative developer/city/county financing mechanisms to maintain and preserve open space or parkland which may be dedicated in fee as part of the proposed development.
- 3) project design features which provide for pedestrian or bicycle links to any parkland which may be dedicated in fee as part of the proposed development.

Nothing set forth in this policy shall require the Board of Supervisors to allow this additional development in scenic landscape units. Development, if any, proposed pursuant to this policy may be allowed after public hearing if the Board, in its sole discretion, determines that the proposed development is desirable for the community as a whole and is otherwise consistent with the General Plan and the criteria set forth above.

**OS-2d:** Apply the Scenic Resources combining district consistent with this element to all lands located within scenic landscape units.

**OS-2e:** Require that new structures meet the following criteria:

- 1) they are sited below exposed ridgelines
- 2) they use natural landforms and existing vegetation to screen them from view from public roads. On exposed sites, screening with native, fire retardant plants may be required.
- 3) cuts and fills are discouraged and where practical, driveways are screened from public view.
- 4) utilities are undergrounded where economically practical.

Exempt agricultural accessory structures from this policy if their use does not require a use permit in the zoning ordinance. If compliance with these standards would make a parcel unbuildable, site structures where minimum visual impacts would result.

**OS-2f:** Use the following standards in addition to those of Policy OS-2e for subdivisions in scenic landscape units:

- 1) establish building envelopes for structures. Consider use of height limitations if necessary to further mitigate visual impacts.



- 2) use clustering to reduce visual impact where consistent with the land use element.
- 3) locate building sites and roadways to preserve significant existing tree stands and significant oak trees.

**OS-2g:** Identify critical scenic areas within designated scenic landscape units. To the extent allowed by law, consider requiring dedication of a permanent scenic or agricultural easement at the time of subdivision for properties within these critical scenic areas.

**OS-2h:** Consider voluntary transfer of development rights (TDR) and purchase of development rights (PDR) programs and make scenic landscape units eligible with owner consent.

**OS-2i:** For development on parcels located both within scenic landscape units and adjacent to scenic corridors, apply the more restrictive siting and setback policies to preserve visual quality.

## 2.3 POLICY FOR SCENIC CORRIDORS

Many residents of Sonoma County value highly the variety and beauty of the County's many landscapes as viewed from rural roadways. Motorists can travel from urban centers into orchard and forest covered hills, rolling dairy lands, and scenic valleys planted in vineyards. Preserving these landscapes is important to the character of the county.

**Goal OS-3** Identify and preserve roadside landscapes which have a high visual quality as they contribute to the living environment of local residents and to the county's tourism economy.

**Objective OS-3.1:** Designate the scenic corridors on Figures OS-5a through OS-5i along roadways which cross highly scenic areas, provide visual links to major recreation areas, give access to historic areas, or serve as scenic entranceways to cities.

**Objective OS-3.2:** Provide guidelines so future land uses, development and roadway construction are compatible with the preservation of scenic values along designated scenic highway corridors.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives:**

**OS-3a:** Apply the Scenic Resources combining district to those portions of properties within scenic corridor setbacks.

**OS-3b:** For development on parcels located both within scenic landscape units and adjacent to scenic corridors, apply the more restrictive siting and setback policies to preserve visual quality.

**OS-3c:** Establish a rural scenic corridor setback of 30 percent of the depth of the lot to a maximum of 200 feet from the centerline of the road unless a different setback is provided in the planning area policies (Section 3.0). Prohibit development within the setback with the following exceptions:

- 1) New barns and similar agricultural support structures added to existing farm complexes provided that such structures proposed within a State Scenic Highway or where local design review exists by community choice in an adopted specific or area plan are subject to administrative design review.
- 2) New barns and similar agricultural support structures which do not require a use permit in the zoning ordinance provided that such structures proposed within a State Scenic Highway or where local design review exists by community choice in an adopted specific or area plan are subject to administrative design review.
- 3) Maintenance, restoration, reconstruction, or minor expansion of existing structures.
- 4) Other new structures if they are subject to design review and
  - a) they are associated with existing structures,
  - b) there is no other reasonable location for the structure,
  - c) the location within the setback is necessary for the use, or
  - d) existing vegetation and topography screen the use.

- 5) Compliance with the setback would render the parcel unbuildable.
- 6) Satellite dishes which are not visible from the roadway.

**OS-3d:** Establish a building setback of 20 feet along the Highway 101 Scenic Corridor in urban service areas to be reserved for landscaping. Where a sound barrier must be located along a scenic corridor, ensure that the landscaped area is visible from the highway. Cooperate with state agencies to achieve compatible goals with regard to visual quality along scenic corridors.

**OS-3e:** Incorporate design criteria for scenic corridors in urban areas.

**OS-3f:** Refer building permits within the setback along historic Bohemian Highway between Occidental and Freestone and Bodega Highway between Bodega and Freestone to the Sonoma County Landmarks Commission for review and recommendations.

**OS-3g:** Avoid freeway oriented billboards along designated scenic corridors. Establish design criteria for consideration of new freestanding outdoor advertising structures or signs along designated scenic corridors to retain visual quality. Consider amortization of existing signs subject to the limitations of state law as a condition of approval for discretionary permits.

**OS-3h:** Design public works projects to minimize tree damage and removal along scenic corridors. Where trees must be removed, design replanting programs so as to accommodate ultimate planned highway improvements. Require revegetation following grading and road cuts.

**OS-3i:** Recognize Highway 116 from Highway 1 to the southern edge of Sebastopol as an official state scenic highway. Consider requesting official state scenic highway designations for Highways 1 and 37. Upon the request of local residents, the County may pursue similar state status for other scenic corridors.

**OS-3j:** Consider the Bodega Bay Bypass as a scenic corridor upon completion of construction.

### 3.0 BIOTIC RESOURCES

Sonoma County is rich in plant and animal habitats which warrant protection. Primary components mapped on the open space plan maps are critical habitat areas and riparian corridors. Figure OS-3 on page 185 shows these areas.

#### 3.1 POLICY FOR CRITICAL HABITAT AREAS

Certain biotic resource communities provide wildlife habitat and contribute to the quality of life in Sonoma County. These critical habitat areas are designated on Figure OS-3 and require special protection because they are highly sensitive to change and could be adversely affected by development.

Important critical habitat areas include:

- 1) **Wetlands and Marshes** - These are identified as critical habitats and may include, but are not limited to, tidal salt marshes and estuaries, freshwater marshes such as the Pitkin, Petaluma and Kenwood marshes, and vernal pools. Wetlands provide a habitat for many animal and plant species and serve as the base of a food chain which supports many types of fish, waterfowl and other birds and mammals. Loss of wetlands affects these species and decreases hunting, fishing, and recreational opportunities.
- 2) **Other Critical Habitats** - Remnants of native bunchgrasses and oak savannas represent the original vegetation of Sonoma County. Sargent Cypress Forests, Pygmy Forests, and Coastal Dunes contain rare and endangered species, are easily damaged and are difficult to reestablish. These areas may include but are not limited to preserves of the Sonoma County Land Trust, Audubon Society, Academy of Science, Nature Conservancy and Bouverie.



**Goal OS-4** Identify critical habitat areas and assure that the quality of these natural resources is maintained and not adversely affected by development activities.

**Objective OS-4.1:** Designate important wetlands, marshes and other critical habitats and maintain low intensity land uses in these areas.

**Objective OS-4.2:** Establish development guidelines to protect designated critical habitat areas.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives:**

**OS-4a:** Add a Biotic Resources combining district to the zoning ordinance.

**OS-4b:** Rezone to the Biotic Resources combining district any lands designated as a critical habitat area.

**OS-4c:** Require the preparation of a biotic resource assessment to develop mitigation measures if the Planning Director determines that a discretionary project could adversely impact a designated critical habitat area.

**OS-4d:** Establish building envelopes to avoid designated critical habitat areas on tentative maps.

**OS-4e:** Require on building permits a minimum setback of 50 feet from the edge of any wetlands which are within a critical habitat area. Exempt existing farm buildings and allow them to be expanded or modified.

**OS-4f:** Consider waiver of the setback if, after preparation of a biotic resource assessment, it is determined that applying the setback makes the parcel unbuildable or the structure is a noncommercial agricultural building and must be located adjacent to an existing farm complex for efficient farm operation.

**OS-4g:** Consider voluntary transfer of development rights (TDR) and purchase of development rights (PDR) programs and make critical habitat areas eligible with owner consent.

### **3.2 POLICY FOR RIPARIAN CORRIDORS**

Areas along streams with native vegetation are referred to as riparian corridors. Diverse vegetation and the streamside environment offer insect and plant food, shelter, and nesting sites and provide a water source for birds, fish, and mammals. The plant cover regulates water, temperature and provides a nursery habitat for trout, salmon, steelhead, and other fish.

Riparian vegetation contributes to both water quantity and quality. Plants and trees serve as filters for sediment, pesticides, and fertilizers. They stabilize banks and keep soils loose and permeable, allowing aquifers along streams to be recharged. Elimination of natural plant communities along streams can increase surface run-off and siltation, which, in turn, can create a stream environment detrimental to fisheries. Riparian corridors are therefore an important part of open space.

Riparian areas can create conflicts with agricultural and urban uses. Overgrazing can remove vegetative cover. Lands along streams often contain prime cropland soils. Riparian areas can harbor insect pests and plant diseases which may infect adjacent vineyards and orchards.

**Goal OS-5** Provide protective measures for riparian corridors along selected streams which balance the need for agricultural production, urban development, timber and mining operations, and flood control with preservation of riparian values.

**Objective OS-5.1:** Classify important streams with native vegetation as "riparian corridors". Develop guidelines to protect and manage these areas as valuable resources.



# SCHEMATIC MAP OF DESIGNATED NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AREAS

## OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The Open Space Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated natural resource areas:

Critical Habitat Area



Riparian Corridor



- Notes: 1) See Figures OS-5a through OS-5i for precise mapping of areas within each planning region subject to these policies.  
2) The Open Space Element text may express policies for additional natural resource protection areas which are not designated on the maps.

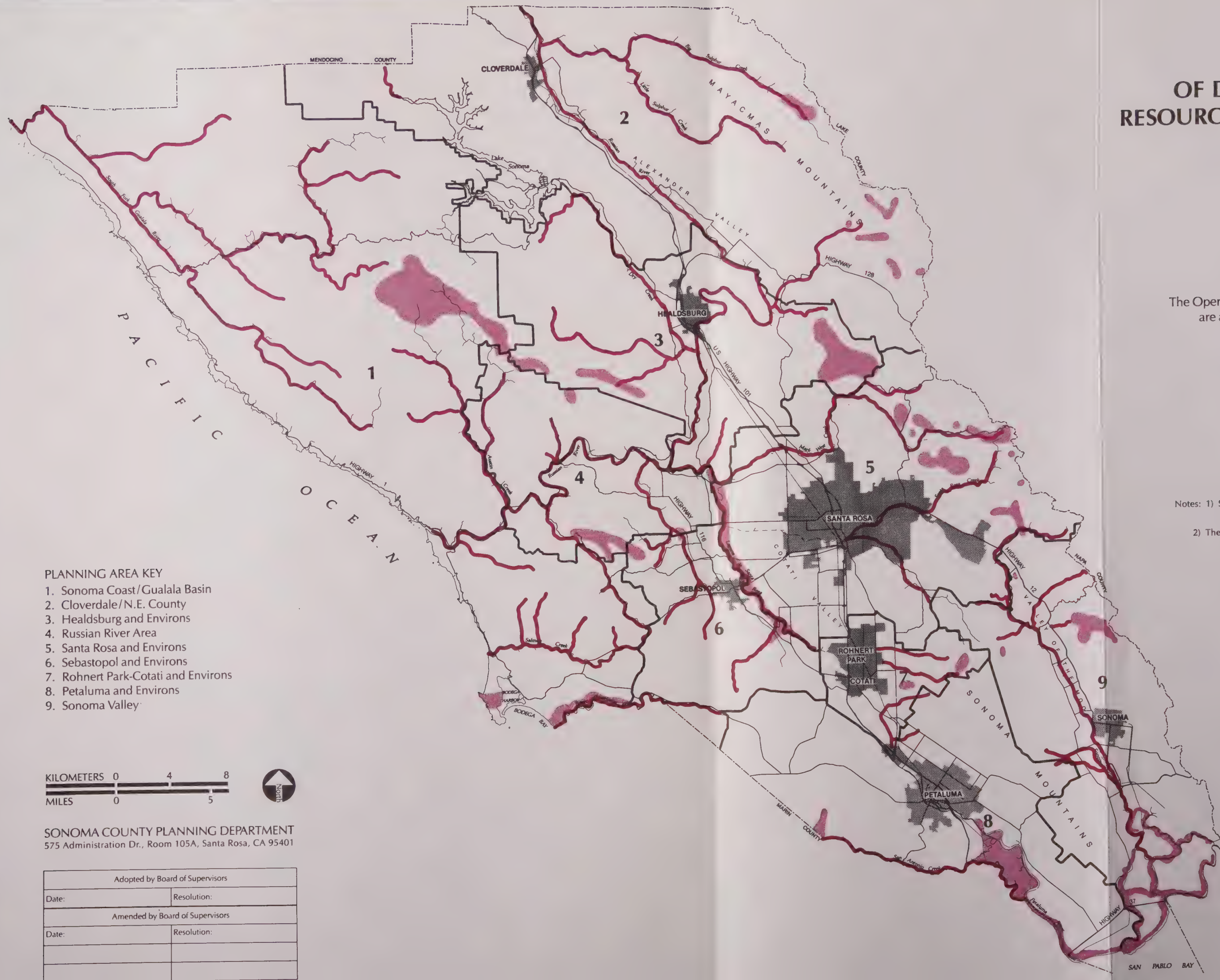
### PLANNING AREA KEY

- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
- 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
- 3. Healdsburg and Environs
- 4. Russian River Area
- 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
- 6. Sebastopol and Environs
- 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
- 8. Petaluma and Environs
- 9. Sonoma Valley



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

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The County shall use the following policies to achieve the above objective:

**OS-5a:** Classify riparian corridors designated in the open space element as follows:

- 1) "Urban Riparian Corridors" include those portions of designated corridors within urban residential, commercial, industrial, or public/quasi-public land use categories.
- 2) "Russian River Riparian Corridor" includes the corridor adjacent to any part of the Russian River which is neither located within the above urban riparian corridor nor within the jurisdiction of a city.
- 3) "Flatland Riparian Corridors" include the corridors adjacent to any streams which flow through predominantly flat or very gently sloping land, generally with alluvial soil. This classification excludes areas covered by 1) and 2) above.
- 4) "Upland Riparian Corridors" include the corridors adjacent to streams not included in the above three categories.

**OS-5b:** Rezone to the Biotic Resources combining district any lands designated as riparian corridors.

**OS-5c:** Establish streamside conservation areas, measured from the top of the higher bank as determined by the SCWA, for designated riparian corridors as follows:

- 1) Urban Riparian Corridors: 50'
- 2) Russian River Riparian Corridor: 200'
- 3) Flatland Riparian Corridors: 100'
- 4) Upland Riparian Corridors: 50'

**OS-5d:** Designate additional riparian corridors in specific plans, area plans, or local area development guidelines which will be subject to policies included therein.

**OS-5e:** Allow or consider allowing the following uses within any streamside conservation area:

- 1) Timber operations conducted in accordance with an approved timber harvest plan.
- 2) Streamside maintenance.
- 3) Road crossings and street crossings, utility line crossings.
- 4) Mining operations conducted in accordance with the County Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance.
- 5) Permitted summer dams.
- 6) Grazing and similar agricultural production activities not involving structures or cultivation, except as defined by 7) below.
- 7) Agricultural cultivation:
  - a) located no closer than 100' from the top of the bank in the "Russian River Riparian Corridor".
  - b) located no closer than 50' from the top of the bank in "flatland riparian corridors".
  - c) located no closer than 25' from the top of the bank in "upland riparian corridors".
  - d) The setbacks of 7 a), b), and c) above may be reduced through the discretionary approval process or through a plan approved by the Planning Director provided the owner includes appropriate mitigations for potential erosion, bank stabilization and biotic impacts.
- 8) Vegetation removal as part of an integrated pest management program administered by the Agricultural Commissioner.
- 9) Creekside bikeways, trails and parks within urban riparian corridors.
- 10) Development authorized by waiver under OS-5f.

**OS-5f:** Prohibit, except as allowed by OS-5e, structures, roads and utility lines and parking lots within any streamside conservation area. Consider waiver of this prohibition if:

- 1) it makes a lot unbuildable and vegetation removal is minimized,
- 2) no significant disturbance of riparian habitat would occur, or
- 3) the use involves only the maintenance, restoration or minor expansion of an existing structure.

A biotic resource assessment may be required prior to issuance of a waiver.



**OS-5g:** Review timber harvest plans adjacent to designated riparian corridors and request that clear cutting not occur within streamside conservation areas. Where clear cutting is approved by the applicable state or federal agency along designated riparian corridors, ensure that at least 50 percent of the overstory canopy and at least 50 percent of the understory vegetation be retained.

**OS-5h:** Use the following criteria to determine whether or not public projects are consistent with this element:

- 1) Non-emergency Water Agency projects which include significant streambank modification are not consistent. Refer plans for vegetation removal for maintenance purposes to the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for review.
- 2) Roadway and utility construction should seek to minimize and mitigate, where feasible, damage to riparian areas. Minimize vegetation removal for necessary stream crossings.
- 3) All criteria established in policy OS-5f.
- 4) Grading, filling or construction shall not substantially diminish or divert any stream flow or result in any substantial increase in bank instability or erosion.

In the event that the above criteria cannot be met, a public project may be found consistent with this element if there is an overriding net public benefit.

**OS-5i:** Refer discretionary permits along undesignated streams to the SCWA and the DFG as part of the environmental review process.

#### **4.0 OUTDOOR RECREATION**

Open space for outdoor recreation, including parks, equestrian and hiking trails, and bicycle routes, provides pleasure and enjoyment for County residents. The Public Facilities and Services Element contains a detailed analysis of parkland needs and implementation measures. Figures OS-4a and 4b on pages 191 and 193 show designated outdoor recreation areas.

##### **4.1 POLICY FOR PARKS AND EQUESTRIAN AND HIKING TRAILS**

As of 1986, hiking and riding trails were primarily confined to parklands and to Coastal access trails within the Sea Ranch Subdivision. A trail system plan developed by the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department links various parks and expands hiking and riding opportunities. The trail plan is not a trail users guide but a plan for securing lands for a countywide trail system. Many property owners, especially those engaged in agriculture, are concerned about trespassing, liability, and damage if hikers release farm animals or bring unleashed dogs. Funding the acquisition and maintenance of trails is also an issue.

**Goal OS-7** Establish a countywide park and trail system which meets future recreational needs of the county's residents while protecting agricultural uses. The emphasis of the trail system should be near urban areas and on public lands.

**Objective OS-7.1:** Provide for adequate parklands and trails primarily in locations that are convenient to urban areas to meet the outdoor recreation needs of the population, while not affecting agricultural uses.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve this objective:**

**OS-7a:** Apply the "Public-Quasi Public/Park" designation to all existing local, county, and state parklands.

**OS-7b:** Apply the "Park" designation to indicate general areas where a need exists for parks.

**OS-7c:** Consider requiring dedication of public access by fee or easement from a public roadway to a navigable stream (Subdivision Map Act), the ocean, public lakes, and major reservoirs as a condition of approval for major subdivisions if 1) the project blocks an existing public access point or it results in the need for additional access, and 2) other reasonable access is not available.

**OS-7d:** The trails on Figure OS-4a on page 191 make up the County's designated plan for trails. Trail locations are approximate and are described below. Roadways may be used where access cannot be obtained through private property.

1. **Gualala River Waterway Trail.** The Gualala River is a navigable waterway and as such, public access is protected by Article XV, Section 2 of the California Constitution. The trail follows the river from the Sonoma/Mendocino county line to Stewart's Point Road.
2. **Sonoma Coast Trail.** The proposed trail extends from Black Point southward to the Estero Americana, is consistent with California State Coastal Plan policy 145 which calls for establishment of a coastal trail system statewide.
3. **Russian River Waterway Trail.** The Russian River is a navigable waterway from Cloverdale to the coast and as such, public access is protected by Article XV, Section 2 of the California Constitution. This proposed waterway trail extends from the coast to Preston Bridge immediately north of Cloverdale.
4. **Santa Rosa Creek Trail.** The proposed Santa Rosa Creek Trail is located between Guerneville Road and Highway 101 and is owned in fee by the SCWA.
5. **Santa Rosa - Forestville Trail.** The proposed trail primarily follows the abandoned right-of-way of the Petaluma and Santa Rosa Railroad from Highway 101 to Forestville at Highway 116.
6. **Gossage and Hinebaugh Creek Trail.** The proposed trail follows a SCWA channel between Llano Road and Petaluma Hill Road. The trail further extends southward to the intersection of Stony Point Road and Highway 116. It is owned in fee by the Agency.
7. **Copeland Creek Trail.** The proposed trail follows Copeland Creek and links Rohnert Park near Sonoma State University to Crane Creek Regional Park.
8. **Taylor Mountain Trail.** The proposed trail connects the proposed Taylor Mountain County Park with Annadel State Park.
9. **Stevenson Trail.** The proposed trail was proposed by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation in 1958 to connect Robert Louis Stevenson Park and the Napa Valley.
10. **Hood Mountain Trail North.** The proposed trail links Hood Mountain County Park to a 240-acre Bureau of Land Management holding to the east at the Sonoma/Napa county line.
11. **Hood Mountain - Annadel Trail.** The proposed trail links Hood Mountain County Park to Annadel State Park, however a crossing at Highway 12 will be necessary to obtain.
12. **Valley of the Moon Trail.** The proposed trail traverses the Valley of the Moon between Jack London State Park and the Sonoma/Napa county line and links Sonoma Valley Regional Park to the Glen Ellen community.
13. **Sonoma Trail.** The proposed trail follows the right-of-way of the Northwestern Railroad from the City of Sonoma to Highway 121/12.
14. **Petaluma River Waterway Trail.** The Petaluma River is a navigable waterway and as such, public access is protected by Article XV, Section 2 of the California Constitution. The proposed trail extends from Shollenberger River Park to San Pablo Bay.

Classify potential trails as follows:



- 1) Recreational Waterways: Recognize boating and canoeing activities on designated waterways. Limit hiking trails to connections between urban areas, parks and the waterway.
- 2) Hiking and Equestrian Trails: Locate a trail system along the Sonoma County/Napa County boundary. Link existing and proposed state and county parks adjacent to urban areas.
- 3) Multiple Use Trails: Use railroad rights-of-way and water agency channels as multiple use trails for hiking, equestrian and bike use. Use existing roadways as alternative routes if access cannot be obtained.

**OS-7e**: Encourage private organizations to assist in the construction and maintenance of trails.

**OS-7f**: Consider requiring a dedication in fee or by easement for trails as a condition of approval of subdivisions. There must be a need identified on Figures OS-4a or OS-4b on pages 191 and 193 and the project must either block an existing access or result in the need for additional recreational opportunities. Locate and fence trails to minimize impacts on agricultural uses.

**OS-7g**: Use the following guidelines to determine consistency of projects involving lands with abandoned railroad rights of way where reasonably related to the impacts of the project:

- 1) The project does not or will not preclude the use of the right-of-way for trails.
- 2) A width of 60 feet generally is reserved for trail purposes, unless the Regional Parks Department determines that a different width would be adequate.
- 3) An irrevocable offer of dedication for the right-of-way has been made to the County of Sonoma.

**OS-7h**: Identify and evaluate alternative sites in the Boyes Hot Springs area to meet the projected need for a regional park facility in Sonoma Valley.

## 4.2 POLICY FOR BIKEWAYS

Bicycles are used both for daily transportation and for recreation. At present, however, the bicycle must compete with the automobile for roadway space. The lack of an adequate bikeways system discourages their use. There are three types of bikeways:

- 1) Class I Bikeway is a bike path for the exclusive use of bicycles. It is separated from the road by space or a barrier. A bike path may be on part of a road right-of-way or on a separate right-of-way.
- 2) Class II Bikeway is a bike lane on a right-of-way for the primary use of bicycles. Through travel by autos or pedestrians is not allowed, although vehicle parking is permissible.
- 3) Class III Bikeway is a bike route which shares its right-of-way with either moving autos or pedestrians.

State bicycle touring routes in Sonoma County include Highway 1, Highway 116, Highway 128, and a north/south route including "D" Street in Petaluma, Petaluma Hill Road, Old Redwood Highway, Dry Creek Road, and Dutcher Creek.

**Goal OS-8** Provide a bicycle trail system which meets both the transportation and recreational needs of residents.

**Objective OS-8.1**: Provide bikeways which connect major residential, commercial, employment, educational, cultural, and recreation areas.

**Objective OS-8.2**: Coordinate the locations and types of bicycle routes with CalTrans and city routes.

**Objective OS-8.3**: Use abandoned railroad rights-of-way, natural waterways, flood control rights-of-way and public lands for Class I bikeways. Where portions of rights-of-way are difficult to obtain, existing roadways may provide alternative alignments.



# SCHEMATIC MAP OF DESIGNATED OUTDOOR RECREATION AREAS

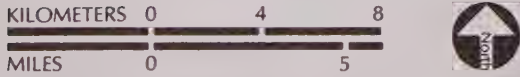
## OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The Open Space Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated outdoor recreation areas:

- Existing/Proposed Parks & Public Lands
- Hiking and Equestrian Trail
- Multi-Use Trail
- Waterway Trail

Note: Location of trails are approximate for planning purposes only. This map does not confer the right to trespass on private property or controlled government land. Contact the Regional Parks Department for information on public trails.

- PLANNING AREA KEY
- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
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  - 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
  - 6. Sebastopol and Environs
  - 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
  - 8. Petaluma and Environs
  - 9. Sonoma Valley



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

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SCHEMATIC MAP OF DESIGNATED  
OUTDOOR RECREATION AREAS  
PLANNED BIKEWAY ROUTES

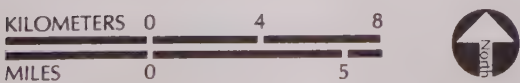
OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The Open Space Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated bikeway routes:

- Class I Bikeway
- Class II Bikeway
- Class III Bikeway

Note: Map indicates proposed bikeways for planning purposes and is not intended to imply that these are improved, designated bikeways.

- PLANNING AREA KEY
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The County shall use following policies to achieve these objectives:

**OS-8a:** Recognize the bicycle routes on Figure OS-4b on page 193 as the County's bikeways plan. Proposed bikeways are for planning purposes only.

**OS-8b:** Allow flexibility for design of bikeways where an alternate bikeway class may be considered more appropriate than that designated on Figure OS-4b.

**OS-8c:** Designate the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department as the agency responsible for establishing and maintaining Class I bikeways along railroad rights-of-way, flood control channels, waterways and in parks. Design bikeways to protect residences with fencing and/or landscaping. Coordinate bikeway design with appropriate law enforcement and fire agencies.

**OS-8d:** Designate the Sonoma County Department of Public Works as the agency responsible for establishing and maintaining Class II and Class III bikeways along roadways in unincorporated areas.

**OS-8e:** Use the following criteria to determine consistency of public projects with this element:

- 1) Construction or widening of arterial and collector roadways designated for Class II bikeways include roadway space for bikeways.
- 2) Construction or widening of arterials and collector roadways designated for Class III bikeways include paved shoulders for bikeways.
- 3) Review acquisition and development of railroad rights-of-way for transit for potential multiple use as bicycle trails.

**OS-8f:** Ensure the provision of adequate bikeways while preserving visual quality along scenic corridors.

**OS-8g:** Seek state and federal funding and grants for bikeway construction.

**OS-8h:** Encourage private organizations to assist in the maintenance and patrol of bikeways.

**OS-8i:** Encourage state and federal projects to be designed in conformance with proposed bikeways shown on Figure OS-4b. Request that projects be designed to accommodate the proposed bikeway routes.

## 5.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL / HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Historic preservation is intended to maintain reminders of the County's heritage and development. Historic building surveys for the Coastal, Sebastopol, Healdsburg, and Sonoma Valley areas provide an inventory of the county's historic resources, some of which may be threatened by development or by a lack of maintenance. Archaeological sites provide information on the history and culture of Sonoma County's earliest residents and can be disturbed by development activities. Heritage and landmark trees enhance the quality of the environment and have historical significance.

**Goal OS-9** Preserve significant archaeological and historical sites which represent the ethnic, cultural, and economic groups that have lived and worked in Sonoma County. Preserve unique or historically significant heritage or landmark trees.

**Objective OS-9.1:** Encourage the preservation and conservation of historic structures by promoting their rehabilitation or adaptation to new uses.

**Objective OS-9.2:** Encourage preservation of historic building or cemeteries by maintaining a Landmarks Commission to review projects which may affect historic structures or other cultural resources.

**Objective OS-9.3:** Encourage preservation of archaeological resources by reviewing all development projects in archaeologically sensitive areas.

**Objective OS-9.4:** Identify and preserve heritage and landmark trees.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives:**

**OS-9a:** Designate the County Landmarks Commission to review projects within designated historic districts.

**OS-9b:** Refer proposals for County Landmark status and rezonings to the Historic Combining District to the County Landmarks Commission.

**OS-9c:** The County Landmarks Commission shall review Historic Building Surveys and make recommendations for designation of structures or cemeteries as county landmarks.

**OS-9d:** Include a list of historic structures proposed for designation as county landmarks in specific or area plans or local area development guidelines and refer the list to the Landmarks Commission for their recommendations.

**OS-9e:** Refer applications which involve the removal, destruction or alteration of a structure or cemetery identified in a historic building survey to the Landmarks Commission for mitigation. Measures may include reuse, relocation, or photo-documentation.

**OS-9f:** Refer applications for discretionary permits to the Northwest Information Center to determine if the project site might contain archaeological or historical resources. If a site is likely to have these resources, require a field survey and include mitigation measures if needed. Discourage paving over resources.

**OS-9g:** Use the Heritage or Landmark Tree Ordinance and the design review process to protect trees.

**OS-9h:** Pursue grant funding for the preparation and updating of historic resource inventories.

**OS-9i:** Designate the County Landmarks Commission to administer a preservation program for stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic structures.

## **6.0 OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

### **Open Space Program 1: Open Space Zoning Ordinance Amendments**

**Program Description:** Prepare a Scenic Resources combining district, a Biotic Resources combining district, an amendment to the sign regulations to prohibit off-site advertising signs in designated scenic corridors, an amendment to regulate the placement of satellite dishes along scenic corridors, and a revision of parking regulations to provide bicycle parking spaces.

### **Open Space Program 2: Subdivision Ordinance Amendment to Establish Open Space Siting Requirements**

**Program Description:** Prepare an ordinance amendment which would require building envelopes in community separators and scenic landscape units and building setbacks for scenic corridors, riparian areas and critical habitat areas.

### **Open Space Program 3: Request State Scenic Highway Designations for Highway 1 and Highway 37**

**Program Description:** Adopt a resolution requesting a state study and appointment of citizens committee which includes representation from property owners along the corridor. The final scenic highway report will be sent to the Board and the State for approval.



**Open Space Program 4: Establishment of an Open Space District**

**Program Description:** Consider a ballot measure to establish an Open Space District to acquire and administer open space lands. Include an appropriate funding source, such as a special tax, to finance acquisition of partial or in-fee interests in lands, including purchase of development rights on a voluntary basis, in designated open space areas.

**Open Space Program 5: Acquisition of Lands for Trails**

**Program Description:** The Regional Parks Department shall continue to include in its five-year capital improvement program any proposed county acquisition or development of lands for trails.

**Open Space Program 6: Community Separator Implementation Plan**

**Program Description:** Prepare a plan which evaluates each of the eight community separators and establishes guidelines and implementation tools such as 1) transfer or purchase of development rights programs, 2) establishment of incentives to encourage agricultural uses, 3) wastewater spray irrigation programs, 4) purchase for parks or agriculture and 5) sign and landscaping standards. The plan should be coordinated with cities to achieve uniform city/county policies and to provide funding mechanisms.

**Open Space Program 7: Scenic Landscape Unit Visual Study**

**Program Description:** Prepare a visual study of designated scenic landscape units to identify critical scenic areas within these areas. Include mechanisms for long term management and preservation of scenic values, such as easements, within critical scenic areas.

**Open Space Program 8: Boyes Hot Springs Regional Park Study**

**Program Description:** The Regional Parks Department shall prepare a study of alternative sites in the Boyes Hot Springs area of Sonoma Valley to identify an appropriate location for an approximate 38-acre regional park.









**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California**

**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

To acknowledge the importance of agricultural production in and to Sonoma County, the Board of Supervisors directed the inclusion in the general plan of an Agricultural Resources Element. The policies in this element have the same legal status as those in any state mandated element.

The Agricultural Resources Element defines agriculture as an industry which produces and processes food, fiber, and plant materials. The purpose of the element is to establish policies to insure the stability and productivity of the County's agricultural lands and industries. The element is intended to provide clear guidelines for decisions in agricultural areas. It is also intended to express policies, programs and measures that promote and protect the current and future needs of the agricultural industry. If future technology of the agriculture industry requires alternative and yet unforeseen policies and implementation mechanisms, those should be consistent with the County's commitment to encourage the maintenance of a healthy agriculture sector of the county's economy.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

General policy direction for land use decisions in agricultural areas is expressed in the Land Use Element, in both the agricultural use categories and in the planning area policies where the diversity of conditions in the county's agricultural areas can be recognized. Policies expressed in the Agricultural Resources Element are intended to apply only to lands designated within the three agricultural land use categories.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

This element has three sections: an introduction, a set of issues with related goals, objectives, and policies, and a set of implementing programs.

## **2.0 GOALS AND POLICIES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE**

### **2.1 ASSIST IN THE MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF SONOMA COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS**

Successful promotion and marketing of agricultural products grown in Sonoma County can both enhance the County's image and reduce economic pressure on farmers and ranchers to subdivide or convert the land to nonagricultural uses.

This element shall establish policies which will assist in promoting and marketing agricultural products grown or processed in Sonoma County.

**Goal AR-1:** Promote a healthy and competitive agricultural industry whose products are recognized as being produced in Sonoma County.

**Objective AR-1.1** Create and facilitate opportunities to promote and market agricultural products grown or processed in Sonoma County.

**Objective AR-1.2** Permit marketing of products grown and/or processed in Sonoma County in all areas designated for agricultural use.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives:**

**AR-1a:** Permit a wide variety of promotional and marketing activities of county grown and processed products.

**AR-1b:** The Economic Development Board shall promote agriculture as a major county industry.

**AR-1c:** Consider the promotion of county agricultural products a high priority in the disbursement of available funds, including the advertising budget.

**AR-1d:** The marketing and promotion of agricultural products is highly dependent upon the public's continued confidence and perception that Sonoma County's agricultural products are raised in an environment which is not exposed to significant levels of hazardous materials. Accordingly, facilities which generate or handle significant amounts of hazardous material shall not be permitted on agricultural lands, nor shall they be established in other land use categories if it is determined that such use would adversely affect the marketing or promotion of the county's agricultural products.

## **2.2 STABILIZE AGRICULTURAL USE AT THE URBAN FRINGE**

Rapid urban growth produces pressures on agricultural lands that tend to discourage new agricultural investment and uses, raises the price of land making purchase for farming unrealistic, and increases the likelihood of purchase for nonagricultural use. Competition occurs between urban and agricultural uses at the urban boundary. This creates a need for policies that a farmer can rely on to invest and reinvest in the agricultural production on his land.

**Goal AR-2:** Maintain for the timeframe of this plan agricultural production on farmlands at the edges but beyond the urban service boundaries of cities and urban service areas, to minimize the influence of speculative land transactions on the price of farmland and to provide incentives for long term agricultural use.

**Objective AR-2.1:** Limit intrusion of urban development into agricultural areas.

**Objective AR-2.2:** Maintain the urban service boundaries to protect agricultural lands at the urban fringe for continued agricultural production.

**Objective AR-2.3:** Limit extension of urban services such as sewer beyond the urban service boundaries.

**Objective AR-2.4:** Reduce economic pressure for conversion of agricultural land.

The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, to achieve these objectives:

**AR-2a:** Apply agricultural land use categories based on the capability of the land to produce food, fiber and plant material. Unless allowed by policy OS-1c or OS-2c on pages 178 and 181, limit extension of urban services to these lands except by out-of-district agreement to solve a health and safety problem.

**AR-2b:** Prepare a written report to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) regarding the consistency with the general plan of any proposed changes in the sphere of influence or other urban service boundaries for governmental entities which provide water or sewer services.

**AR-2c:** Seek advice from the agricultural community for any future evaluation of land areas needed for urban development or for any consideration by LAFCO of requests to change spheres of influence or urban service boundaries next to or near agricultural lands.

**AR-2d:** Use voluntary purchase or voluntary transfer of development rights programs to limit intrusion of residential development in agricultural lands. If TDR or PDR is used, amendments of the land use map or rezonings shall not be used to lower density in anticipation of conferring transfer or purchase rights.



**AR-2e:** Encourage LAFCO to make one of the following findings before approving annexations or changing spheres of influence: the proposed development would not be at the expense of agriculture, or that the community's need for the development in the proposed location is paramount.

### **2.3 LIMIT INTRUSION OF NEW RESIDENTIAL USES INTO AGRICULTURAL AREAS**

County zoning has permitted small residential lots to be clustered together, surrounded by large agricultural areas. This type of development withdraws some land from production, exposes a large perimeter area to conflicts, and threatens the interior areas. In intensively farmed areas, the disadvantages of the conflicts thus created outweigh the benefits. On extensive agricultural lands, however, creation of a limited number of small lots on marginally productive land leaves the largest parcel available for farming. As long as the number of small lots is kept to a minimum, conflicts may not be severe. The Agricultural Resources Element establishes policies that maintain parcels in agricultural areas predominantly in sizes that farmers would be willing to lease or buy for farming.

**Goal AR-3:** Maintain the maximum amount of land in parcel sizes that a farmer would be willing to lease or buy for agricultural purposes.

**Objective AR-3.1:** Avoid the conversion of agricultural lands to residential or nonagricultural commercial uses.

**Objective AR-3.2:** Maintain, in those agricultural land use categories where small parcels may be permitted, the largest land area for agricultural use. Limit the number of clustered lots in any one area to avoid the potential conflicts associated with residential intrusion.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, to achieve these objectives:**

**AR-3a:** In the "Land Intensive Agriculture" category, new parcels shall not be created which are smaller than 20 acres.

**AR-3b:** In considering subdivision of lands within "Land Extensive Agriculture" areas except those lands under Williamson Act contract, one-half or three of the permitted residential lots (whichever is greater), may be clustered. These clustered parcels may be as small as one and one-half acres but no larger than ten acres. No future subdivision of these small parcels shall be permitted. All other parcels created in this category shall have a minimum lot size at least as large as the maximum density specified by the land use plan map or that allowed by policy AR-8c on page 208, whichever is more restrictive.

**AR-3c:** Where clustered subdivision is permitted, separate clusters on one site from those on another site unless it is clearly demonstrated that the resulting lots will not create the appearance of, or conflicts associated with, residential intrusion. Any subdivision which proposes to cluster parcels of 10 acres or less, shall locate those lots around existing residences on the parcel being subdivided. The intent of this policy is to minimize the impact of residential parcels on adjacent agricultural operations.

**AR-3d:** Wherever practical, where clustered subdivision is permitted, use natural features such as ridge tops, creeks, and substantial tree stands to separate the small parcels from the farming areas.

**AR-3e:** Where clustered subdivision is permitted, to the extent allowed by law, place an agricultural easement in perpetuity on the residual farming parcel(s) at the time that the subdivision occurs. The easement shall be conveyed to the County or other appropriate non profit organizations.

**AR-3f:** Avoid amendments of the land use plan map from an agricultural to a nonagricultural use category for the purpose of allowing increased residential density which may conflict with agricultural production.



## **2.4 MITIGATE CONFLICTS BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL AND NONAGRICULTURAL USES IN DESIGNATED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AREAS**

Both on the urban fringe and in the midst of agricultural areas, parcelization has occurred which has resulted in residential use being the primary use of the land. Complaints about noise, odors, flies, spraying and similar "nuisances" attendant to agricultural practices have discouraged and sometimes prevented farmers from managing their operations in an efficient and economic manner. Not only do residents complain about aspects of farming operations, but residential areas often directly affect the operations. For example, residential sites can become a sanctuary for pests which could damage adjacent crops. Clear policy is needed for County decision makers to balance the needs of the farmer with the concerns of his many residential neighbors.

The Agricultural Element establishes policies that support the needs and practices of agriculture as the highest priority in areas designated for agricultural use.

**Goal AR-4:** Allow farmers to manage their operations in an efficient, economic manner with minimal conflict with nonagricultural uses.

**Objective AR-4.1:** Apply agricultural land use categories only to areas or parcels capable of the commercial production of food, fiber and plant material. Establish agricultural production as the highest priority use in these areas or parcels. The following policies are intended to apply only to lands designated within agricultural land use categories.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, to achieve this objective:**

**AR-4a:** The primary use of any parcel within the three agricultural land use categories shall be agricultural production and related processing, support services, and visitor serving uses. Residential uses in these areas shall recognize that the primary use of the land may create agricultural "nuisance" situations, such as flies, noise, odors, and spraying of chemicals.

**AR-4b:** Apply agricultural zoning districts only to lands in agricultural land use categories to implement the policies and provisions of the Agricultural Resources Element.

**AR-4c:** Protect agricultural operations by establishing a buffer between the agricultural land use and the residential use at the urban fringe adjacent to an agricultural land use category. Buffers shall generally be defined as a physical separation of 100 to 200' and/or may be a topographic feature, a substantial tree stand, water course or similar feature. In some circumstances a landscaped berm may provide the buffer. The buffer shall occur on the parcel for which a permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmable land.

**AR-4d:** Apply the provisions of the "Right to Farm" Ordinance to all lands designated within agricultural land use categories.

**AR-4e:** Enforce provisions of existing state nuisance law (California Code Sub-section 3482.5)

**AR-4f:** Prepare for consideration by the Board of Supervisors specific measures, including any necessary ordinances, that would carry out voluntary purchase or transfer of development rights from agricultural areas to designated nonagricultural areas.

**AR-4g:** Anticipated conflicts between a proposed new agricultural use and existing agricultural activities shall be mitigated by the newer use or application.

## **2.5 REGULATE THE LOCATION AND INTENSITY OF AGRICULTURE RELATED COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES IN AGRICULTURAL AREAS**

Given its broad diversity, Sonoma County agriculture requires a variety of supplies and services. Certain of these support services may be most appropriately located on agricultural lands. The determination of which services belong on agricultural lands involves their connection to agriculture, potential for conflicts, the size, scale and adaptability of the use, and the amount of land lost to farming. Policies are needed to permit on agricultural lands the uses which support agriculture without undermining production activities.

**Goal AR-5:** Facilitate agricultural production by allowing certain agricultural support services to be conveniently and accessibly located in agricultural production areas when related to the primary agricultural activity in the area.

**Objective AR-5.1** Facilitate County agricultural production by allowing agricultural processing facilities and uses in all agricultural land use categories.

**Objective AR-5.2** Facilitate County agricultural production by permitting limited agricultural support service uses that support local agricultural activities and are not harmful to the long term agricultural use in the area.

The County shall use the following policies in addition to those in the Land Use Element to achieve the above objectives:

**AR-5a:** Provide for facilities that process agricultural commodities in all three agricultural land use categories. Establish standards and procedures in the zoning ordinance for permitting those facilities.

**AR-5b:** Define "agricultural support services" as processing services, maintenance and repair of farm machinery and equipment, veterinary clinics, custom farming services, agricultural waste handling and disposal services, and other similar related services.

**AR-5c:** Only permit agricultural support service uses that clearly support local agricultural production consistent with the specific requirements of each of the three agricultural land use categories. Insure that such uses are clearly subordinate to on-site agricultural production and do not adversely affect agricultural production in the area. Establish standards and procedures for those uses in the zoning ordinance.

**AR-5d:** Use the following guidelines for approving zoning or permits for agricultural support services:

- 1) The use will not require the extension of sewer or water.
- 2) The use does not substantially detract from agricultural production on-site or in the area.
- 3) The use does not create a concentration of commercial uses in the immediate area.
- 4) The use is compatible with and does not adversely impact surrounding residential neighborhoods.

**AR-5e:** Local concentrations of any commercial or industrial uses, even if related to surrounding agricultural activities, are detrimental to the primary use of the land for the production of food, fiber and plant materials and shall be avoided.

**AR-5f:** Permit storage facilities for agricultural products either grown or processed on the site. Size the facilities according to the processing operation.

## **2.6 REGULATE THE LOCATION AND INTENSITY OF VISITOR SERVING COMMERCIAL USES WITHIN AGRICULTURAL AREAS**

The benefits and potential adverse impacts of visitor serving uses vary by agricultural industry. Wine tasting is an important promotional component of the viticulture industry, yet the people who come to enjoy the wine country may create a conflict with necessary practices of land intensive farming. This "people versus practices"



conflict suggests a limit to tourist activities in vineyard areas, most of which are sufficiently close to communities which have available sites for such visitor services as lodgings and restaurants.

In extensive agricultural areas, some conflicts between visitors and agricultural practices are less severe due to the greater amount of land available to separate the activities. In these areas, small scale lodgings and some outdoor recreational uses could promote the agricultural activity and provide a secondary income source for the farmer or rancher without hindering the primary use of the land.

The Agricultural Resources Element promotes the County's agricultural industry by establishing policies which allow specific, limited visitor serving uses in agricultural areas.

**Goal AR-6:** Allow new visitor serving uses and facilities in some agricultural areas but limit them in scale and location. These uses must be beneficial to the agricultural industry and farm operators and compatible with long term agricultural use of the land.

**Objective AR-6.1** Give the highest priority in all agricultural land use categories to agricultural production activities. Any visitor serving facilities shall promote agriculture and be secondary and incidental to the area's agricultural production.

**Objective AR-6.2** Permit tasting rooms and stands for the sale and promotion of products grown or processed in the County in all agricultural land use categories if they support and do not adversely affect the agricultural production activities of the area. Bed and breakfast inns of five or fewer rooms and campgrounds of up to 30 sites are permissible only in the "Land Extensive Agriculture" and "Diverse Agriculture" categories if they do not adversely affect the agricultural production activities of the area.

The following policies, in addition to those of the Land Use Element, shall be used to accomplish the above objectives:

**AR-6a:** Limit visitor serving uses in agricultural categories to those which promote agricultural production in the county, specifically to tasting rooms and stands for the sales and promotion of products grown or processed in the county. Limit recreational uses to the "Land Extensive Agriculture" and "Diverse Agriculture" categories, specifically to bed and breakfast inns of five or fewer rooms and campgrounds of 30 or fewer sites.

**AR-6b:** Notwithstanding policy AR-6a, recognize existing restaurants or lodging facilities and those which were approved during adoption of this plan, but limit their expansion or intensification.

**AR-6c:** Nonagricultural land use categories shall not be applied to lands surrounded by agricultural land use categories for purposes of permitting recreational or visitor serving uses or facilities.

**AR-6d:** Follow these guidelines for approval of visitor serving uses in agricultural areas, such as wine or cheese tasting:

- 1) the use promotes and markets only agricultural products grown or processed in Sonoma County.
- 2) the use is compatible with existing agricultural production activities in the area.
- 3) the use will not require the extension of sewer and water.

**AR-6e:** Follow these guidelines for approval of recreational uses in agricultural areas, such as bed and breakfast inns or campgrounds:

- 1) the use is compatible with any agricultural activity or existing residential use in the area.
- 2) the use will not require the extension of sewer or water.
- 3) all potential conflicts are mitigated to the satisfaction of the County.

**AR-6f:** Recreational facilities for off-road vehicles of any size shall not be permitted within any agricultural land use category.



**AR-6g:** Concentrations of visitor serving uses in a local area, even if related to surrounding agricultural activities, are detrimental to the primary use of the land for the production of food, fiber and plant materials and may constitute grounds for denial for such uses.

**AR-6h:** Define in the zoning ordinance compatible visitor serving facilities and their permissible sizes and intensities.

## **2.7 HOUSING FOR FARM WORKERS AND FARM FAMILY MEMBERS**

Efficient management of agricultural production activities requires adequate numbers of employees to be housed on both a seasonal and a permanent basis. Farm related housing issues involve the location, amount and type of housing for seasonal employees, permanent employees and farm family members. The Agricultural Resources Element establishes policies to allow limited amounts of housing to meet the various needs of farmworkers, farm operators and farm families in addition to permitted residential density.

**Goal AR-7:** Support efficient management of local agricultural production activities by the development of adequate amounts of farm worker and farm family housing in agricultural areas.

**Objective AR-7.1:** Encourage farm operators to provide sufficient housing in addition to housing permitted by applicable density for permanent and seasonal agricultural employees and for family members to maintain agricultural production activities.

**Objective AR-7.2:** Locate agricultural employee housing where it promotes efficiency of the farming operation and has minimal impact on productive farmland.

**Objective AR-7.3:** Assist nonprofit organizations or agencies in their efforts to establish a program to provide safe and adequate housing for farm workers.

**Objective AR-7.4:** Permit a limited number of farm family housing units in addition to the number of dwellings allowed by the density.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those of the Land Use Element, to achieve these objectives:**

**AR-7a:** Permit permanent employee housing in addition to permitted density according to the needs of a particular sector of the agricultural industry. Express in the zoning ordinance specific criteria to establish the number of agricultural employee units.

**AR-7b:** Permit one additional dwelling unit in addition to permitted density for members of the farm operator's immediate family 1) in the "Land Extensive Agriculture" category, or 2) in the "Land Intensive Agriculture" category if a Williamson Act Contract is in effect. Family units shall not be subdivided from the primary agricultural parcel, shall generally be located close to the main unit, and shall be occupied only by a member of the family engaged in the farming operation.

**AR-7c:** Work with lending institutions to develop ways to finance housing construction without encumbering the entire farm and without requiring subdivision.

**AR-7d:** Assist the Community Development Commission and other appropriate agencies in developing programs for farm worker housing.

**AR-7e:** Allow clustering of agricultural employee housing on a portion of a parcel or a noncontiguous parcel under the same ownership if the units are closer to the primary unit than to the property line.

**AR-7f:** Permit housing for seasonal workers as needed to serve the agricultural industries of the area if it does not necessitate the extension of sewer or water service. This housing may be constructed to the minimum standards approved by the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

**AR-7g:** Allow temporary housing, including temporary sanitary and cooking facilities, for seasonal farmworkers during harvest season.

**AR-7h:** Encourage County agencies to establish appropriate standards and pre-approved plans for temporary, seasonal, dormitory housing.

## **2.8 ASSIST IN STABILIZING FARMER'S ECONOMIC SITUATION**

As with any business, investment in agriculture must earn a reasonable return for it to continue. Yet, many uncontrollable factors, including weather, yields, and prices, cause incomes from farming to vary greatly year to year. At the same time, a farmer's home and business are tied together financially. This combination of factors creates pressure which undermines the stability of the agricultural use. Policies are needed to create and support incentive programs, stabilize the farmer's economic situation, and maintain the land in agriculture.

**Goal AR-8:** Assist in formulating programs that could provide alternative sources of capital for agricultural production without selling or encumbering the farmland as collateral. These measures include, but are not limited to, voluntary programs for purchase and transfer of development rights.

**Objective AR-8.1:** Continue participation in the Williamson Act program.

**Objective AR-8.2:** Participate with wastewater generators to establish programs for agricultural reuse of treated wastewater in a manner which would be economically beneficial to agriculture.

**Objective AR-8.3:** Encourage formulation of programs and evaluate alternative funding sources which offer financial incentives to the farm owner to reduce reliance on subdivision and sale of land to raise operating capital.

**The County shall use the following policies to implement these objectives:**

**AR-8a:** Encourage agencies to sponsor a variety of on going educational programs that assist the farmer in financial planning and to provide technical assistance where appropriate.

**AR-8b:** Encourage programs for promotion and marketing of agricultural products grown in the county.

**AR-8c:** Subdivision of any Williamson Act contracted lands shall not result in any new parcel less than 10 acres in size for Type 1 preserves or 40 acres in size for Type 2 preserves, or the established minimum lot size, whichever is more restrictive. Each proposed new parcel must separately meet the economic criteria that the original parcel met at the time that the contract was executed.

**AR-8d:** Make any purchase or transfer of development rights program for agricultural lands a voluntary program.

**AR-8e:** Prepare a transfer of development rights proposal for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

**AR-8f:** Encourage participation in programs for reuse of treated wastewater, including the establishment of wastewater irrigation districts.



## **2.9 STREAMLINE PERMIT PROCESSING FOR AGRICULTURAL USES IN DESIGNATED AGRICULTURAL LAND USE CATEGORIES.**

Obtaining permits to construct an agricultural facility is time consuming and expensive to many farmers. In agricultural land use categories, streamlining the permit processing to focus on health, safety and environmental issues would assist farming.

The Agricultural Resource Element establishes policies to streamline permit processing for agricultural uses and facilities.

**Goal AR-9: Have agricultural permit processing procedures that are rapid and efficient.**

**Objective AR-9.1:** Establish permit processing procedures that will simplify and shorten the decision making process for permits on agricultural lands.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives:**

**AR-9a:** Allow processing of multiple permits for agricultural facilities together.

**AR-9b:** Consider barns and similar agricultural support structures on agricultural lands as part of the scenic environment not requiring design review approval except 1) where local design review exists by community choice established in an adopted specific plan, area plan or local area development guidelines or 2) where a State Scenic Highway designation has been approved by the Board of Supervisors and by the State of California. In such cases, the County shall advise the applicant in writing of the standards and criteria for design review. The ministerial decision regarding design review shall be appealable directly to the Board of Supervisors.

**AR-9c:** Establish procedures and standards in the zoning ordinance to distinguish those agricultural uses and activities which may be approved by administrative action and to expedite the processing of permits for agricultural and agriculture related uses.

**AR-9d:** Approve administratively temporary use permits for farmworker housing and occasional cultural events if the requirements of all appropriate agencies have been met.

**AR-9e:** Maintain provisions for agriculture exempt structures, subject to limitations on the size, occupancy and use of such structures.

**AR-9f:** Limit permit conditions for agricultural uses to those related to the proposed project unless health or safety issues must be resolved regarding the entire operation.

## **2.10 AQUACULTURE AND THE COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY**

Aquaculture and the fishing industry produce a food source and have needs similar to land based agricultural operations. Policy is needed to treat the support facilities of the fishing industry that relate to food production or harvesting in the same manner as those of other agriculture.

**Goal AR-10.:** Provide for the raising, harvesting and production of fish in the same manner as the harvesting and production of agricultural products.

**Objective AR-10.1:** Allow aquaculture and its related facilities and activities in all agricultural areas.

**Objective AR-10.2:** Provide opportunities for development of support facilities for the fishing industry on appropriate lands.



**Objective AR-10.3:** Promote products of the fishing industry in the same manner as agricultural products.

The County shall use the following policies in addition to those in the Resource Conservation Element to achieve these objectives:

**AR-10a:** Permit aquaculture and related facilities, including fish processing, in the same manner as other agricultural production uses.

**AR-10b:** Allow support facilities for off-shore commercial fishing, including but not limited to equipment storage, processing facilities, and canneries, on lands designated for agricultural land use adjacent to the urban service boundary of Bodega Bay. If the facility or use requires urban services, permit extension of such services on lands adjacent to the urban boundary only for that purpose.

### **3.0 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

#### **Agriculture Resources Program 1: Revisions of Agricultural Zoning District Regulations**

**Program Description:** Rewrite the agricultural zoning districts and other relevant sections of the Sonoma County code to reflect accurately the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element.

#### **Agricultural Resources Program 2: Subdivision Ordinance Regulations in Agricultural Areas**

**Program Description:** Prepare an amendment to the Subdivision Ordinance (1) providing findings for approval of clustered residential lots in the "Land Extensive Agriculture" and "Diverse Agriculture" categories and requiring a long term protective easement when clustered subdivision has occurred; and (2) providing subdivision conditions to minimize conflicts and maximize long term agriculture protection.

#### **Agricultural Resources Program 3: Right to Farm Ordinance**

**Program Description:** Prepare a Right to Farm Ordinance which shall describe normal farm practices expected to occur in agricultural areas and insure the right of the farmer to continue such practices subject to appropriate health and safety standards. The ordinance shall specify that it applies only to areas designated with agricultural land use categories. A summary of the ordinance shall be mailed annually to all property owners with tax bills.

#### **Agricultural Resources Program 4: Transfer of Development Rights Proposal**

**Program Description:** Prepare a voluntary transfer of development rights proposal establishing requirements and procedures for transfer of development rights from certain agricultural areas to specified receiving areas. Receiving areas may be jointly identified by a city through a joint powers agreement.

#### **Agricultural Resources Program 5: Farmworker Housing**

**Program Description:** The Housing Authority will consider establishing a program to provide seasonal farm workers with mobile housing which could be located on any specific parcel during harvest.

#### **Agricultural Resources Program 6: Establishment of an Agricultural Advisory Committee**

**Program Description:** Appoint an Agricultural Advisory Committee with representation from geographic areas and from the major sectors of the agricultural industry. The Agricultural Advisory Committee shall be a policy oriented committee and advise the Board of Supervisors.







**RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California 95403**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The Resource Conservation Element provides for the conservation of natural resources including water, forests, soils, rivers, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. It supports the county's economic base by promoting the production and use of the county's resources. It guides land use decisions that will contribute to the long term maintenance of resource production.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Resource Conservation Element has been closely coordinated with the Agricultural Resource and Open Space Elements for consistency. The Land use Element complements the policies of the Resource Conservation Element and is consistent with conserving and maintaining the long term productivity of resource lands.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

The Resource Conservation Element addresses the following:

- soil resources
- water resources
- forest and woodland resources
- vegetation and wildlife resources
- fishery resources
- geothermal resources
- mineral resources
- energy resources
- air resources

Areas subject to Resource Conservation policies are shown on Figures RC-2a through RC-2i on pages 229 through 245.

## **2.0 SOIL RESOURCES**

Soil resources policy tries to maintain soil productivity and prevent lands with productive soils from converting to nonresource uses and to promote soil management and conservation practices that will maintain productivity of those lands.

### **2.1 CONSERVATION OF LANDS WITH SOILS SUITABLE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TIMBER PRODUCTION**

Important farmland soils are located throughout the county but are concentrated primarily in the Sonoma Valley, west Sebastopol, west Santa Rosa, Alexander Valley, and Dry Creek Valley regions. Soil, climate, topography and water combine to make these lands highly productive agricultural areas. However, lands with good agricultural soils are often desirable for building sites as they are generally located in flat valleys with few physical constraints. Important timberland soils are located primarily in the northwest county and Russian River area.

**Goal RC-1** Encourage the conservation of soil resources to protect their long term productivity and economic value.

**Objective RC-1.1:** Preserve lands containing prime agricultural and productive woodland soils and avoid their conversion to incompatible residential, commercial or industrial uses.

The following policies in addition to those in the Land Use and Agricultural Resources Elements shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-1a:** Apply the "Land Intensive Agriculture", "Land Extensive Agriculture", and "Diverse Agriculture" land use categories to areas with productive agricultural soils.

**RC-1b:** Apply the "Resources and Rural Development" land use category to all lands with timberland production zoning to protect timber production soils.

**RC-1c:** Annually review the California Department of Conservation's updated Important Farmland's Map and the amount of land in the county converted to and from agricultural use.

## **2.2 PREVENTION OF SOIL EROSION**

Although some types of soils are more susceptible to erosion, all benefit from conservation practices. Erosion results in the loss of topsoil which may reduce crop yields and cause sedimentation problems downstream. Sediment can fill reservoirs and stream channels, reduce water quality and storage capacity, and damage fishery and wildlife habitats. Erosion is caused by a combination of high rainfall, lack of cover, fragile soils, and steep slopes. Activities which may increase erosion include urban development, road and general construction activities, logging, mining, agriculture and recreational activities.

Soil loss in the Petaluma Valley under adverse conditions has been severe. Hillside cultivation and overgrazing are a particular concern. Measures are needed to reduce erosion. However, protection measures may not always be cost effective for the landowner.

**Goal RC-2** Promote and encourage soil conservation and management practice that maintain the productivity of soil resources.

**Objective RC-2.1:** Ensure that permitted uses are compatible with reducing potential damage due to soil erosion.

**Objective RC-2.2:** Establish ways to prevent soil erosion and restore areas damaged by erosion.

**The following policies shall be used to carry out these objectives:**

**RC-2a:** Design discretionary projects so that structures and roads are not located on slopes of 30 percent or greater. This requirement is not intended to make any existing parcel unbuildable if Health Department and Building Department requirements can be met.

**RC-2b:** Include erosion control measures for any discretionary project involving construction or grading near waterways or on lands with slopes over 10 percent.

**RC-2c:** Encourage agricultural land owners to work closely with the U. S. Soil Conservation Service and local Resource Conservation Districts to reduce soil erosion and to encourage soil restoration.

**RC-2d:** Require a soil conservation program to reduce soil erosion impacts for discretionary projects which could increase waterway or hillside erosion. Design improvements such as roads and driveways to retain natural vegetation and topography to the extent feasible.

**RC-2e:** Retain natural vegetation and topography to the extent economically feasible for any discretionary project improvements near waterways or in areas with a high risk of erosion as noted in the Sonoma County Soil Survey.

**RC-2f:** Prepare and submit to the Board of Supervisors an erosion and sediment control report.

**RC-2g:** Continue to enforce the Uniform Building Code to reduce erosion and slope instability problems.



### 3.0 WATER RESOURCES

The water used for domestic purposes and agriculture in Sonoma County is generally of good quality. Many streams, however, have water quality problems resulting in part from wastewater discharges. Santa Rosa is investigating several alternative sewage disposal systems, including some systems that would not be dependent on river discharge. Failing or overloaded septic systems may also affect water quality.

Channel flow in the Russian River is the primary source of domestic water for the county's urban areas. Sebastopol, Rohnert Park, and Petaluma also use ground water. Rural development is dependent on individual wells. Ground water is scarce in large areas of the county where intensive rural development can lead to overdrafting of water supplies.

Groundwater is recharged through permeable materials. Natural recharge takes place along many streams, rivers, and other alluvial deposits. Development in these areas can increase surface runoff and reduce groundwater quality and recharge capability.

**Goal RC-3** Conserve, enhance, and manage water resources, protect their quality, and assure an adequate long term supply of water for domestic, fishing, industrial and agricultural use.

**Objective RC-3.1:** Preserve watersheds and groundwater recharge areas by avoiding the placement of potential pollution sources in areas with high percolation rates.

**Objective RC-3.2:** Provide development standards in recharge areas to maintain groundwater supplies.

**Objective RC-3.3:** Preserve and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater resources.

**Objective RC-3.4:** Insure that land uses in rural areas be consistent with the availability of groundwater resources.

**The following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use and Public Facilities and Services Elements, shall be used to carry out these objectives:**

**RC-3a:** Grading, filling and construction should not substantially reduce or divert any stream flow that would affect groundwater recharge.

**RC-3b:** Require groundwater monitoring programs for all large scale commercial and industrial uses using wells.

**RC-3c:** Continue to encourage research on and monitoring of local groundwater, watersheds, streams, and aquifer recharge areas in order to determine their water supply value.

**RC-3d:** Continue to encourage the construction of wastewater disposal systems designed to reclaim and reuse treated wastewater on agricultural crops, and for other irrigation and wildlife enhancement projects.

**RC-3e:** Encourage wastewater disposal methods which minimize reliance on discharges into natural waterways. If discharge is proposed, review and comment on projects and environmental documents and request that projects maximize reclamation, conservation and reuse programs to minimize discharges and protect water quality and aquifer recharge areas.

**RC-3f:** The Environmental Health Department shall review all subdivisions using septic systems so that leachants do not contaminate groundwater recharge areas. Consider on-site wastewater management districts in important recharge areas.

**RC-3g:** Consider on-site wastewater management districts in areas with septic problems.

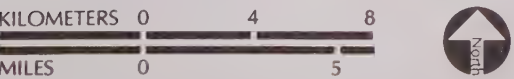


# DRAINAGE BASINS/WATER AND AIR QUALITY JURISDICTIONS

## RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

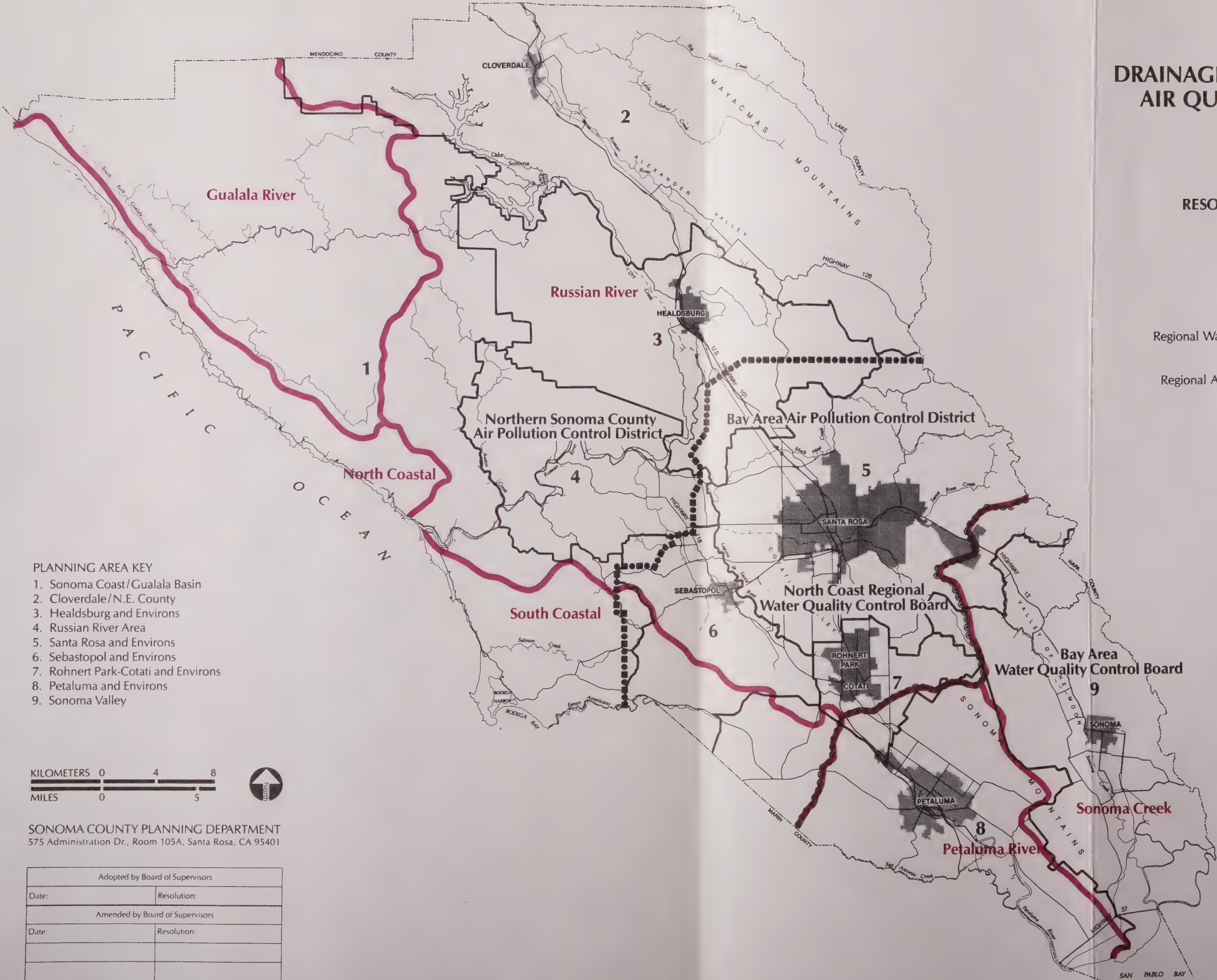
- Drainage Basin Boundary
- Regional Water Quality Control Board Jurisdictional Boundary
- Regional Air Pollution Control Board Jurisdictional Boundary

- PLANNING AREA KEY
- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
  - 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
  - 3. Healdsburg and Environs
  - 4. Russian River Area
  - 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
  - 6. Sebastopol and Environs
  - 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
  - 8. Petaluma and Environs
  - 9. Sonoma Valley



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Adopted by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:
Amended by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:







**RC-3h:** Require proof of adequate groundwater in Class III and IV water areas. Require test wells or the establishment of community water systems in Class IV water areas. Test wells may be required in Class III areas. Deny discretionary applications unless a geologic report establishes that groundwater supplies are adequate and will not be adversely impacted by the cumulative amount of additional development.

**RC-3i:** Actively pursue the abatement of failing septic systems near waterways.

#### **4.0 FOREST AND WOODLAND RESOURCES**

There are about 265,500 acres of commercial timberlands in Sonoma County today. Douglas fir and redwood occur along the north coast while evergreens, oak and pine are further inland. Hardwoods grow within these coniferous forest areas and are the dominant species on 124,900 acres. Private ownership accounts for 72 percent of Sonoma County's commercial forest land and 92 percent of the raw timber growth. In 1984, 2,480,000 board feet of old growth redwood, 9,440,000 board feet of young growth redwoods, and 5,863,000 board feet of douglas fir valued at 2.23 million dollars were harvested.

Rural residential development in some areas has made harvesting operations more difficult. Potential erosion from logging operations and access roads is a major concern. Conversion from timber to hardwoods or non-timber uses and reforestation are also a concern.

The California Timberland Productivity Act requires local jurisdictions to adopt "Timberland Production Zones", rezone commercial timberlands to this zoning district and designate timberlands in the general plan. Jurisdiction over timber harvesting was given to the State Department of Forestry, although counties may request local rules. Approximately 78,000 acres in the county have been zoned in the "Timber Production" District.

**Goal RC-4** Preserve, sustain and restore forestry resources for their economic, conservation, recreation, and open space values.

**Objective RC-4.1:** Identify and preserve areas with timber soils and commercial timber stands for timber production. Avoid incompatible uses in these areas.

**Objective RC-4.2:** Minimize the potential adverse impacts of timber harvesting on economic, conservation, recreation and open space values and restore harvested areas to production for a future yield.

The following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-4a:** Apply the "Resources and Rural Development" category to designate all lands in a "Timberland Production Zone" and adjacent parcels with timber soils or commercial timber stands.

**RC-4b:** Review all timber harvest plans for compatibility with general plan policies and economic viability of the industry.

**RC-4c:** Where applicable, comment on timber harvest plans in support of increased protection of Class III streams.

#### **5.0 VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

##### **5.1 CONSERVATION OF BIOTIC RESOURCES**

Sonoma County has many plant species which can be grouped into eight major plant and biotic communities: 1) tidal areas, 2) wetlands, 3) riparian woodlands, 4) coastal bluffs and dunes, 5) grasslands, 6) brushlands, 7) coniferous forests and 8) woodlands. Wetlands, coastal dunes, sargent cypress communities, and major riparian woodlands are severely limited or threatened by development. Many communities include species which have limited populations and are confined to a few small areas.



Vegetation helps reduce surface runoff, retains soils, and maintain stream banks. Plant communities also provide wildlife and fish habitat and are necessary to maintain a healthy and diverse physical environment.

Some vegetation has been heavily disturbed in the past. Forests have been logged, grasslands, brushlands and woodlands converted to urban or agricultural use, non native species introduced, and natural fires prevented. These activities have changed the landscape and forced wildlife onto marginal lands.

**Goal RC-5** Promote and maintain the County's diverse plant and animal communities and protect biotic resources from development activities.

**Objective RC-5.1:** Identify and encourage protection of areas with important wildlife habitats and woodland resources.

**Objective RC-5.2:** Encourage the use of native plants in landscaping to reduce the risk of introducing exotic plant species into wildlife areas.

**Objective RC-5.3:** Recognize and preserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa and the San Pablo Bay area as biotic resource areas and historic water retention basins of particular significance to Sonoma County's environment.

**In addition to the policies of the Land Use and Open Space Elements, the following policies shall be used to carry out these objectives:**

**RC-5a:** Apply the "Resources and Rural Development" land use category where it is the County's intent to manage and conserve natural resources, including wildlife and vegetation habitats while allowing a compatible level of residential development.

**RC-5b:** On discretionary projects, use native or compatible non native species to the extent possible for landscaping. Discourage use of exotics, such as pampas grass and scotch broom.

**RC-5c:** Make the preservation of significant native oaks and other native trees a primary consideration in the review of development projects.

**RC-5d:** Develop comprehensive programs for preservation and restoration of the Laguna de Santa Rosa as shown on Figures RC-2c, 2d, 2e, and 2f on pages 233 - 239 and for the San Pablo Bay Area as shown on Figures RC-2h and RC-2i on pages 243 - 245. Include mechanisms for preservation and enhancement such as acquisition, zoning and easements. Avoid activities such as filling, grading or construction that would be detrimental to the biotic resources or historic water retention functions of these areas.

**RC-5e:** Encourage landowners to voluntarily participate in the County's Landmark Tree Program.

## **5.2 PROTECTION OF RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Small populations of plants and animals which are in danger of extinction due to the loss or alteration of habitat are protected by state and federal law. These species are highly sensitive to any change in their habitat and could be adversely impacted by development. Rare and endangered plant and animals species frequently provide essential links in the natural ecosystem.

**Goal RC-6** Identify and protect rare and endangered species and their environment.

**Objective RC-6.1:** Identify the locations of rare and endangered plants and animals.

**Objective RC-6.2:** Require that any development on lands containing rare and endangered species be done in a manner which protects the resource or mitigates adverse impacts.

The County shall use the following policies in addition to those of the Open Space Element, to achieve the above objectives:

**RC-6a:** Maintain and update the "Biotic Resource" data maps which show the locations of known rare and endangered species, and use them in the environmental review process for development permits.

**RC-6b:** Protection for rare and endangered species, wetlands, and other biotic resources not indicated on Figure OS-3 on page 185 shall be accomplished through compliance with applicable state and federal law.

**RC-6c:** Notwithstanding the densities shown on the land use maps, provide for creation of separate parcels of land where necessary to establish sites for the preservation of rare and endangered species and other biotic resources.

## **6.0 FISHERY RESOURCES**

### **6.1 PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF MARINE FISHERY AND HARBOR RESOURCES**

Sonoma County contains marine and inland fisheries and a growing aquaculture industry. Bodega Harbor is the home of a major commercial fishing fleet with berth installations, boat launching ramps, fish receiving piers, a navigation channel and a marina. Commercial and sport fishing net salmon, crab, herring, halibut, shark and bottom fish.

Oil exploration and drilling along the coast may adversely affect sensitive areas identified in the Local Coastal Plan. Streams and estuaries serve as nurseries and habitats for commercial fish species and are especially vulnerable to damage by an oil spill. Offshore activities such as oil platforms, pipelines, and tankers could interfere with commercial fishing activities. Ocean disposal of wastewater could also adversely affect nursery areas and the commercial fishing industry.

**Goal RC-7** Protect and conserve the quality of ocean, marine and estuarine environments for their scenic, economic and environmental values.

**Objective RC-7.1:** Promote protection for the native marine and shoreline plant and animal communities along the Pacific coastline and San Pablo Bay shoreline.

**Objective RC-7.2:** Oppose siting of onshore oil and gas facilities which support oil and gas exploration or development in the coastal area.

**Objective RC-7.3:** Review any proposal for ocean or bay disposal of wastewater for consistency with the Sonoma County Coastal Plan and policies on sanctuary and habitat protection and determine the potential for marine fishery habitat degradation.

The following policies shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-7a:** Review and comment on any proposals for the sale of oil leases and/or oil drilling off the Sonoma County Coast. Carry out the Onshore Oil Facilities Ordinance.

**RC-7b:** Review any proposal for ocean disposal of wastewater and comment as to any potential adverse impacts on the fishing and tourism industries and marine resources.

**RC-7c:** Use the policies of the Sonoma County Coastal Plan to protect wetlands, estuaries, and other coastal resources.

**RC-7d:** Encourage the establishment of adequate harbor facilities at Bodega Bay to meet the needs of the local commercial fishing industry. Give commercial fishing boats priority over all other boats and vessels.



## 6.2 PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF FRESHWATER FISHERY RESOURCES

The Russian River, Gualala River, Sonoma Creek, Salmon Creek and Petaluma River are the principal migratory routes for silver salmon and steelhead. Their tributaries are spawning and nursery habitats. Russian River runs of salmon and steelhead are being enhanced by the Warm Springs Hatchery. Activities such as agriculture, logging, mining, water diversions, and land development impact the stream habitat and reduce fishery resources. Sedimentation, loss of riparian vegetation, and stream bank erosion contribute to habitat damage.

**Goal RC-8** Encourage effective management of freshwater fishery resources and balance competing agricultural, development, and mining needs with protection of the stream environment.

**Objective RC-8.1:** Identify sources of sediment and erosion and minimize their impact on local water courses.

**Objective RC-8.2:** Manage riparian corridors along streams to provide protection for fish habitat.

**Objective RC-8.3:** Encourage the preparation of a fishery management plan.

In addition to the policies of the Open Space Element, the following shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-8a:** Encourage educational programs dealing with stream bank stabilization practices.

**RC-8b:** Consider the establishment of a task force to develop a fishery management plan. Include representatives from fishing groups, stream restoration groups, timber, aggregate, and agriculture industries, the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Board, the Department of Fish and Game, and others.

**RC-8c:** Design public and private projects to minimize damage to the stream environment and to maintain instream flows.

**RC-8d:** Avoid substantial alteration of the stream channel and riparian vegetation in the design of flood control projects on streams with substantial natural areas.

## 6.3 AQUACULTURE

Aquaculture in Sonoma County is a small industry with the potential for growth. Several domestic fish breeders grow fresh water trout and bass primarily for recreational use. An experimental aquaculture operation in Bodega Bay grows trout and salmon for the restaurant trade. Siting requirements differ depending upon the species grown and technology. Proper siting is particularly important in coastal areas where sensitive habitats could be harmed.

**Goal RC-9** Support and encourage commercial aquaculture in both marine and fresh water environments.

**Objective RC-9.1:** Evaluate the needs of and encourage further development of the aquaculture industry.

**Objective RC-9.2:** Develop guidelines for siting aquaculture facilities. Develop facilities which are responsive to the species and available technology.

The following policies, in addition to those of the Agricultural Resources Element, shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-9a:** Provide for aquaculture in the "Resources and Rural Development" category and in all three agricultural categories.

**RC-9b:** Develop guidelines in the zoning ordinance for aquaculture facilities to insure the protection of sensitive habitats and prime agricultural soils.



## 7.0 GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES

Geothermal resources in Sonoma County consist of steam, hot water and heat concentrated below the earth's surface. The Geysers, the largest steam dominated geothermal field development in the world, has been used for generation of electricity since 1960. The Geysers' Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA) contains "primary" and "secondary" areas. Generation of electricity is limited to the "primary" resource area.

About 1800 megawatts of electricity were being generated at The Geysers in 1986, and the estimated capacity is 2000-3000 megawatts. Tax revenues and jobs generated by geothermal development significantly benefit the county's economy. County jurisdiction over the siting of power plants and transmission lines has been largely pre-empted by the state. Geothermal activities can conflict with residences and adversely affect vegetation and wildlife, air and water quality, traffic and public services. Geologic and noise impacts also result.

Hot water resources may exist in other areas, including Dry Creek Valley, Alexander Valley and Sonoma Valley. The extent of this resource is not known. Hot water resources can be used for space heating, food drying, aquaculture, greenhouses and other uses of heat.

**Goal RC-10** Manage geothermal resources for various beneficial uses, including electricity, space heating, aquaculture and agriculture.

**Objective RC-10.1:** Plan production to maximize long term use of the geothermal resource and to mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

**Objective RC-10.2:** Permit geothermal power generation to occur only on lands within the "primary" KGRA and to minimize land use conflicts with other uses within this area.

**Objective RC-10.3:** Encourage exploration of the extent and potential use of hot water geothermal resources.

**The following policies, in addition to those of the Land Use Element, shall be used to carry out these objectives:**

**RC-10a:** Prepare a Geothermal Resources Management Plan to provide a framework for evaluation, mitigation and monitoring of the environmental impacts of geothermal development, and establishment of policies and standards for steam and hot water geothermal resource development.

**RC-10b:** Designate lands within the "primary" KGRA with the "Resources and Rural Development" category.

**RC-10c:** Allow the use of hot water geothermal resources in all land use designations if it can be demonstrated that it will be compatible with surrounding land uses.

## 8.0 MINERAL RESOURCES

Various minerals have been mined in Sonoma County during the past century. Aggregate products are now the dominant commercial mineral. In 1984, 5.3 million tons of aggregate were mined in the County and approximately 75 to 112 million tons will be needed over the next 20 years. The impacts of mining activities include noise, dust, truck traffic, erosion, and siltation. These impacts create conflicts with nearby residential, agricultural and recreational uses and impact fishery resources. However, the most significant issue is the loss of agricultural land as a consequence of mining uses.

By law the State Geologist classifies or inventories mineral lands throughout the state. The State has designated certain mineral bearing areas as being of regional significance. Local agencies must 1) adopt mineral management policies which recognize mineral information provided by the State, "...2) assist in the management of land use which affect areas of statewide and regional significance, and 3) emphasize the conservation and development of identified mineral deposits".

Sonoma County has adopted the Aggregate Resources Management (ARM) Plan, a plan for obtaining future supplies of aggregate material. This plan serves as the state-mandated mineral management policy for the county and is intended to accomplish the mandated purposes. During the process of adoption of the plan, the County considered the aggregate resource areas subsequently classified as MRZ-2 by the State Geologist and transmitted by the Board in compliance with the Act in February, 1985. (Aggregate resources are mapped on pages 122-127 and 193-211 of the ARM Plan).

Land use policies have been formulated with full recognition of the classification and designation information transmitted by the State (RC Special Report #146, Part III and Surface Mining and Reclamation Act Designation Report No. 7 and Designation Map No.85-5 incorporated by reference herein). Sonoma County has considered the importance of its aggregate resources to the regional market and not just to the county.

**Goal RC-11** Provide for production of aggregates to meet local needs and contribute the County's share of demand in the North Bay production-consumption region. Manage aggregate resources to avoid needless resource depletion and ensure that extraction results in the fewest environmental impacts.

**Objective RC-11.1:** Use the Aggregate Resources Management Plan to establish priority areas for aggregate production and to establish detailed policies, procedures, and standards for mineral extraction.

**Objective RC-11.2:** Minimize and mitigate the adverse environmental effects of mineral extraction and reclaim mined lands.

**The following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, shall be used to carry out these objectives:**

**RC-11a:** Consider lands designated in the Aggregate Resources Management Plan (ARM) as priority sites for aggregate production and mineral extraction and review requests for additional designations for conformity with the general plan and the ARM plan.

**RC-11b:** Review projects for environmental impact and land use conflicts and consider the following minimum factors when approving mining permits: topsoil salvage, vegetation, fisheries and wildlife impacts, noise, erosion control, roadway conditions and capacities, reclamation and bonding, air quality, energy consumption, engineering and geological surveys, aggregate supply and replenishment, drainage, and the need for economical aggregate materials.

**RC-11c:** Review projects which are on or near sites designated "Mineral Resources" in the ARM Plan for compatibility with future mineral extraction.

## **9.0 ENERGY RESOURCES**

Sonoma County has potential energy resources which have not yet been fully used. Natural gas exploration has taken place east of Petaluma between Sebastopol and Cotati, and along the Laguna de Santa Rosa. The extent of the resource is unknown and production has been minimal. Development could conflict with residential use.

The county's mild climate makes solar heating feasible. Wind energy is a potential resource along the coast and in the Petaluma Wind Gap, but safety, noise, and visual impact are a concern.

The federal government has proposed the leasing of oil tracts offshore near Bodega Bay. Drilling could damage fishery, wildlife, and visual resources and could adversely affect the fishing and tourist industries. In opposing onshore support for offshore oil development, Sonoma County has recognized the nationwide energy need. However, it contributes heavily to this need through its support of geothermal energy production.

There is potential for biomass and municipal waste-to-energy projects. Sources of biomass include manure from dairy operations, slash from timber harvesting, and municipal waste at the central landfill.



**Goal RC-12** Develop alternative energy sources which are compatible with environmental quality, including visual and biotic resources.

**Objective RC-12.1:** Prepare guidelines for development, management and conservation of various potential energy sources, including natural gas, solar, biomass, and wind resources.

**Objective RC-12.2:** Oppose siting of onshore oil and gas facilities which support oil and gas exploration or development in the coastal area.

**Objective RC-12.3:** Establish guidelines for radio, telephone and other communication and transmission towers.

The following policies, in addition to those in the Open Space Element, shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-12a:** Review proposed natural gas wells through the use permit process.

**RC-12b:** Avoid natural gas wells within urban service areas.

**RC-12c:** Consider guidelines for solar access in the proposed design review manual and revision to the subdivision ordinance.

**RC-12d:** Consider preparation of an energy resources plan to evaluate priority areas for energy development and provide standards.

**RC-12e:** Review and comment on all offshore oil activities for their potential impacts on Sonoma County. Carry out the Onshore Oil Facilities Ordinance.

**RC-12f:** Review proposed biomass energy projects through the use permit process.

**RC-12g:** Consider visual impacts in reviewing any discretionary wind, biomass, gas well, or radio, telephone or other communication and transmission tower project in a designated community separator, scenic corridor, scenic landscape unit or in the coastal area. Require a visual analysis to determine project impacts and mitigation measures.

**RC-12h:** Review all transmission line and radio, telephone, or other communication and transmission tower proposals for conformity with Open Space policies. Request that such facilities be located outside of community separators, scenic corridors, scenic landscape units, and biotic resource areas. Give preference to existing over new utility corridors.

**RC-12i:** Consider undergrounding of distribution lines in designated open space areas and in selected community areas.

## 10.0 AIR RESOURCES

Sonoma County residents enjoy the cleanest air in the Bay Area. Nonetheless, air quality is affected when pollutants are concentrated during temperature inversions. As a result, inland valleys are particularly susceptible to air pollution.

Air pollutants include both gases and particulates. The automobile is the most common source of smog. Particulates come from residential, industrial, and agricultural sources, mainly during grading and construction activities.

Sources of air pollution are both stationary and mobile. Mobile sources, such as motor vehicles, produce most of the air pollutants in the county. Air pollution from mobile sources is regulated by the state through exhaust



emissions standards, but can be reduced by proper management of the transportation system. The Geysers power plants are the largest stationary pollutant source. Other stationary sources include mining operations, industrial and agricultural activities and lumber mills. Residential wood stoves are a contributor to particulate levels in urban areas in the north County.

Improved air quality and decisions on air quality standards and mitigation measures are balanced with competing interests for production efficiency, energy costs and ease of transportation while meeting all the requirements of the Federal and State Clean Air Acts.

**Goal: RC-13** Preserve and maintain good air quality and provide for an air quality standard that will protect human health and preclude crop, plant and property damage in accordance with the requirements of the Federal and State Clean Air Acts.

**Objective RC-13.1:** Maintain the projected county air quality as set forth in the Final Environmental Impact Report and minimize air pollution.

**Objective RC-13.2:** Encourage reduced motor vehicle use as a means of reducing resultant air pollution.

The following policies, in addition to those of the Circulation and Transit Element, shall be used to carry out these objectives:

**RC-13a:** Require that commercial and industrial development projects be designed to minimize air emissions. Reduce direct emissions by decreasing the need for space heating.

**RC-13b:** Encourage public transit, ridesharing and van pooling, shortened and combined motor vehicle trips to work and services, use of bicycles, and walking. Minimize single passenger motor vehicle use.

**RC-13c:** Refer projects to the local air quality districts for their review.

**RC-13d:** Review proposed changes in land use designations for potential deterioration of air quality and deny them unless they are consistent with the air quality levels projected in the general plan EIR.

**RC-13e:** Cooperate with the local air quality district to monitor air pollution and enforce mitigations in areas affected by emissions from fireplaces and woodburning stoves.

**RC-13f:** Encourage the adoption of standards, the development of new technology, and retrofitting to reduce air pollution resulting from geothermal development.

**RC-13g:** Residential units shall be required to only install fireplaces, woodstoves or any other residential wood-burning devices that meet the gram-per-hour EPA or Oregon DEQ wood heater emissions limits (exempt devices are not allowed).

## **11.0 RESOURCE CONSERVATION IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

### **Resource Conservation Program 1: Erosion and Sediment Control Report**

**Program Description:** Prepare a report which identifies activities which contribute to erosion and sedimentation and outlines appropriate standards, regulations, enforcement measures and anticipated administrative costs.

### **Resource Conservation Program 2: Resource Management Plans**

**Program Description:** Prepare or consider preparing resource management plans for fisheries, geothermal, and energy resources which specifically identify resource areas, potential land use conflicts and environmental impacts in development of the resource, mitigation measures, development standards, and restoration and

monitoring programs. The Board of Supervisors may appoint committees comprised of representatives from appropriate agencies, organizations and industries to help develop these plans.

**Resource Conservation Program 3: Laguna de Santa Rosa Conservation Program**

**Program Description:** Prepare a comprehensive program for preservation and restoration of the Laguna de Santa Rosa to include the area indicated on Figures RC-2c through -2f. Recognize and identify activities which could adversely impact the area's biotic resource and historic water retention functions. Include appropriate mechanisms for its preservation and enhancement.

**Resource Conservation Program 4: San Pablo Bay Area Conservation Program**

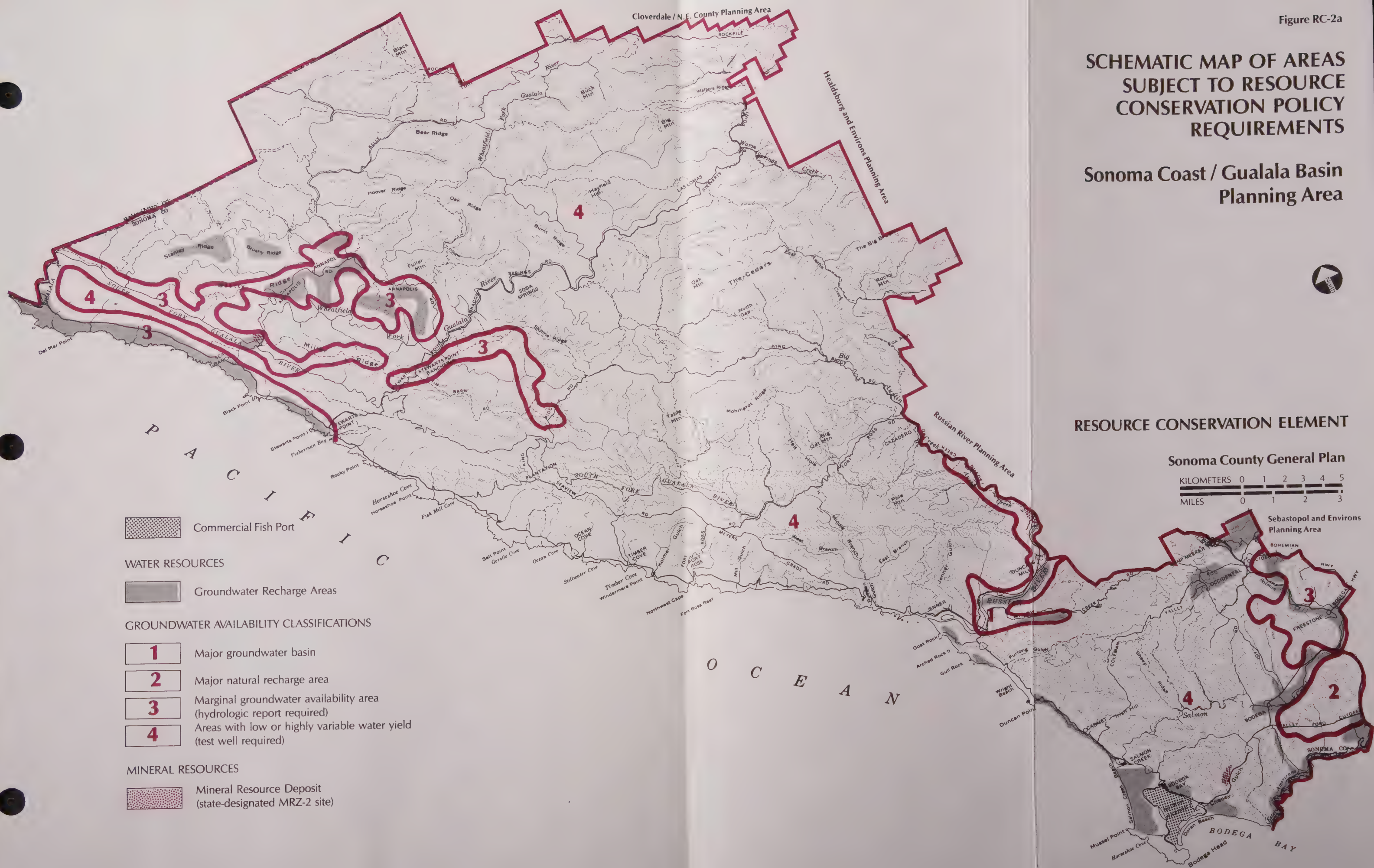
**Program Description:** Prepare a comprehensive program for preservation and restoration of the San Pablo Bay Area to include the area indicated on Figure RC-2h and RC-2i. Coordinate with the appropriate agencies to functions. Identify mechanisms to ensure its preservation and enhancement, including seasonal wetland and freshwater marsh reclamation.





# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

## Sonoma Coast / Gualala Basin Planning Area

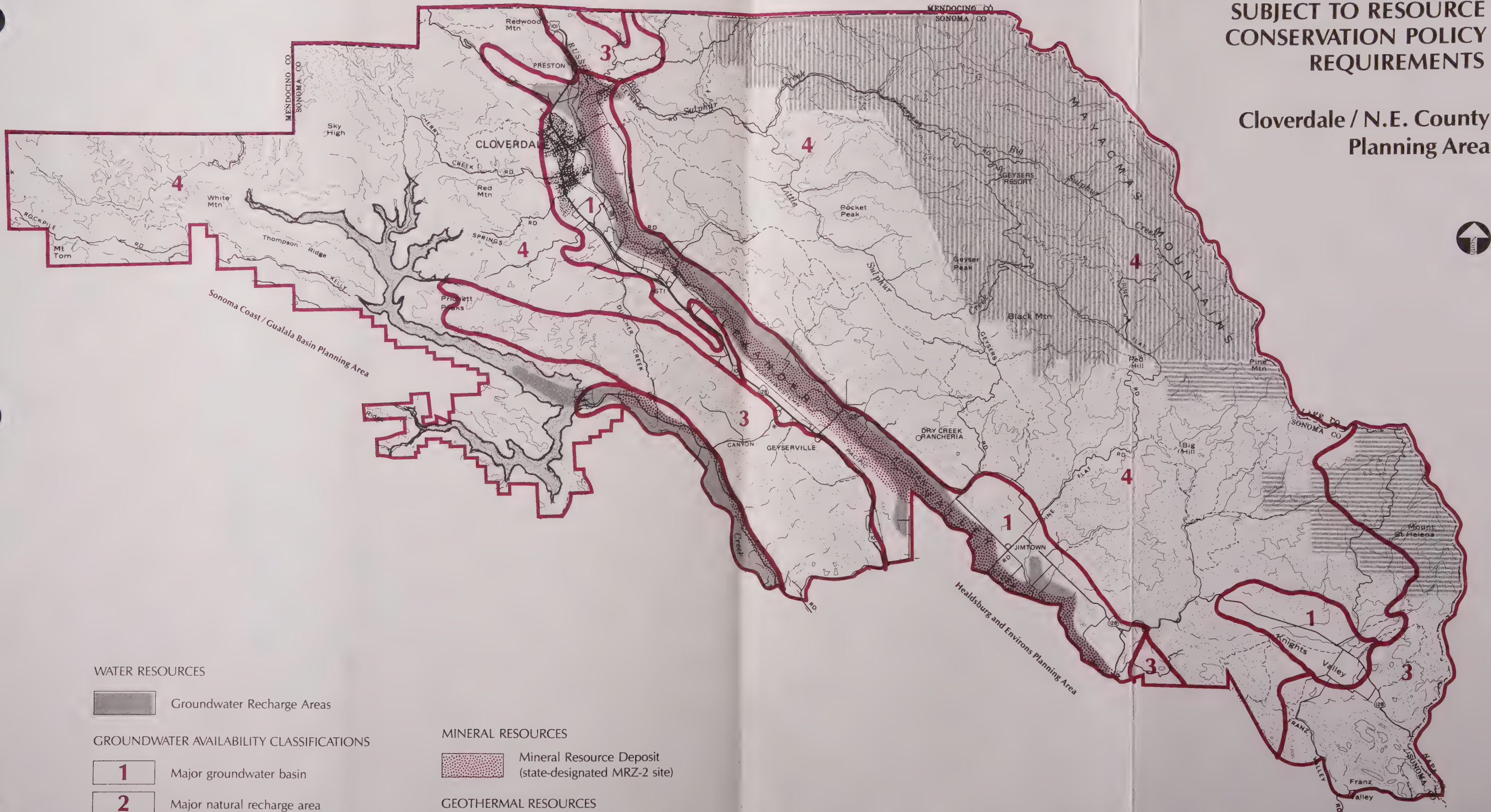






# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

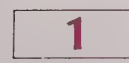
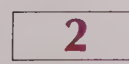
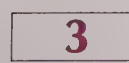
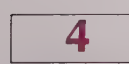
## Cloverdale / N.E. County Planning Area




### WATER RESOURCES

 Groundwater Recharge Areas


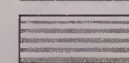
### GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

-  Major groundwater basin
-  Major natural recharge area
-  Marginal groundwater availability area (hydrologic report required)
-  Areas with low or highly variable water yield (test well required)

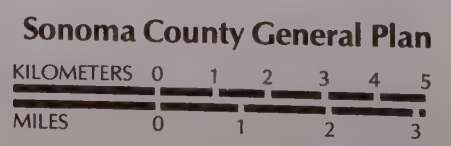
### MINERAL RESOURCES

 Mineral Resource Deposit (state-designated MRZ-2 site)

### GEO THERMAL RESOURCES

-  Primary known Geothermal Resource area
-  Secondary known Geothermal Resource Area

### RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

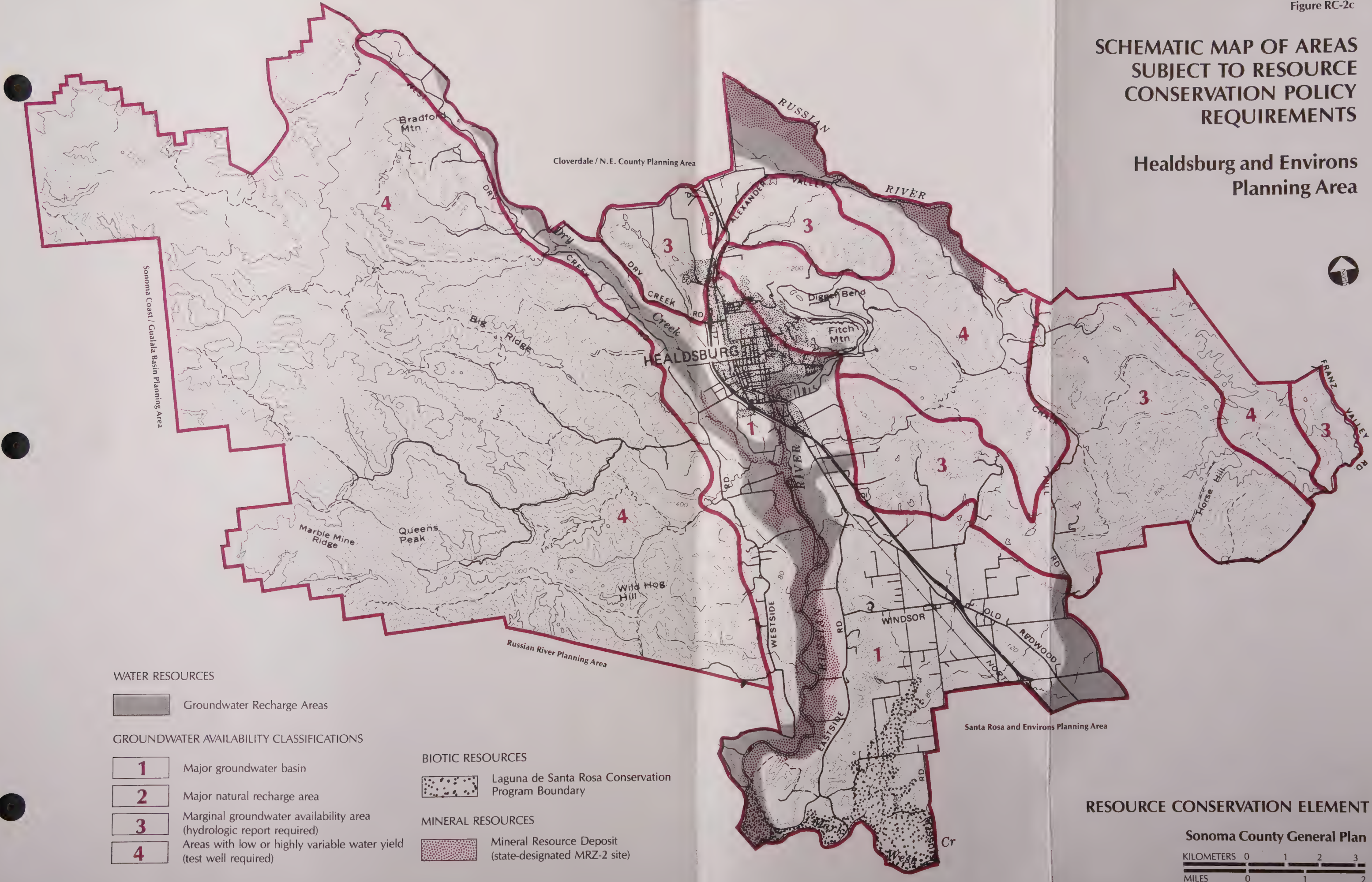






# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

## Healdsburg and Environs Planning Area



WATER RESOURCES

Groundwater Recharge Areas

GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

- 1** Major groundwater basin
- 2** Major natural recharge area
- 3** Marginal groundwater availability area (hydrologic report required)
- 4** Areas with low or highly variable water yield (test well required)

BIOTIC RESOURCES

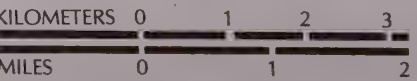
Laguna de Santa Rosa Conservation Program Boundary

MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral Resource Deposit (state-designated MRZ-2 site)

RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Sonoma County General Plan



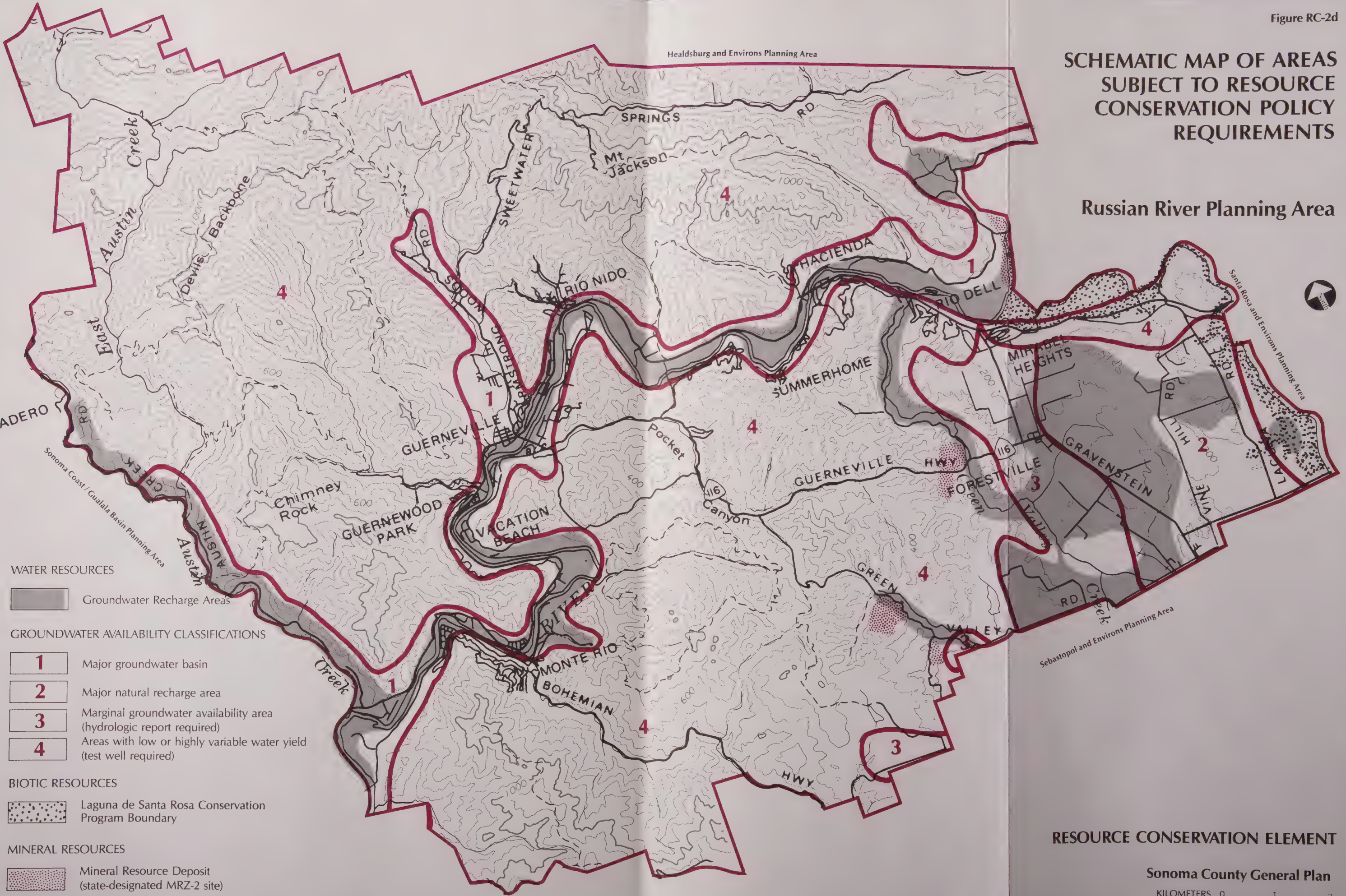




# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

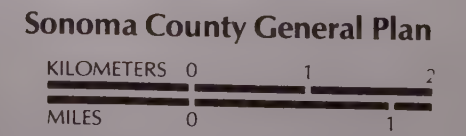
Russian River Planning Area

Healdsburg and Environs Planning Area



- WATER RESOURCES**
- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS**
- 1 Major groundwater basin
  - 2 Major natural recharge area
  - 3 Marginal groundwater availability area (hydrologic report required)
  - 4 Areas with low or highly variable water yield (test well required)
- BIOTIC RESOURCES**
- Laguna de Santa Rosa Conservation Program Boundary
- MINERAL RESOURCES**
- Mineral Resource Deposit (state-designated MRZ-2 site)

## RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT










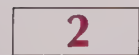
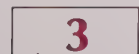
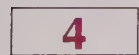
# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Santa Rosa and Environs  
Planning Area

## WATER RESOURCES

 Groundwater Recharge Areas

## GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

-  Major groundwater basin
-  Major natural recharge area
-  Marginal groundwater availability area  
(hydrologic report required)
-  Areas with low or highly variable water yield  
(test well required)

## BIOTIC RESOURCES

 Laguna de Santa Rosa Conservation  
Program Boundary

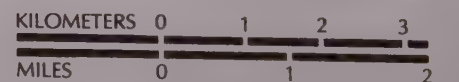
## MINERAL RESOURCES

 Mineral Resource Deposit  
(state-designated MRZ-2 site)



## RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Sonoma County General Plan







# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS


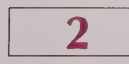
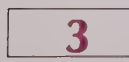

Sebastopol and Environs  
Planning Area



## WATER RESOURCES

 Groundwater Recharge Areas


## GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

-  Major groundwater basin
-  Major natural recharge area
-  Marginal groundwater availability area (hydrologic report required)
-  Areas with low or highly variable water yield (test well required)

## BIOTIC RESOURCES

 Laguna de Santa Rosa Conservation Program Boundary

## MINERAL RESOURCES

 Mineral Resource Deposit (state-designated MRZ-2 site)

## RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Sonoma County General Plan**

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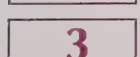
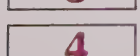


# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS Rohnert Park – Cotati and Environs Planning Area

## WATER RESOURCES

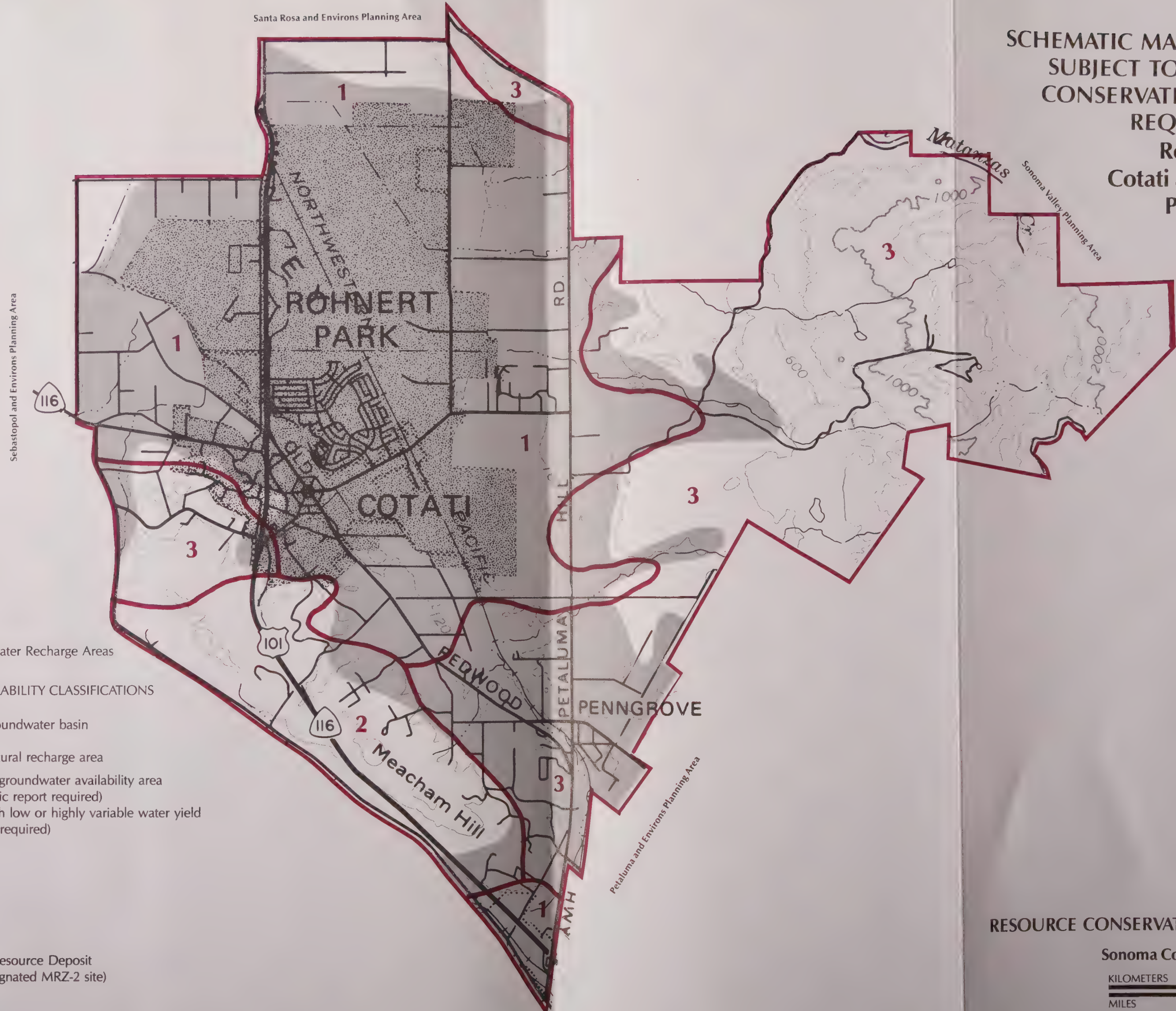
 Groundwater Recharge Areas

## GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

-  Major groundwater basin
-  Major natural recharge area
-  Marginal groundwater availability area (hydrologic report required)
-  Areas with low or highly variable water yield (test well required)

## MINERAL RESOURCES

 Mineral Resource Deposit (state-designated MRZ-2 site)



## RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### Sonoma County General Plan

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# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

## Petaluma and Environs Planning Area

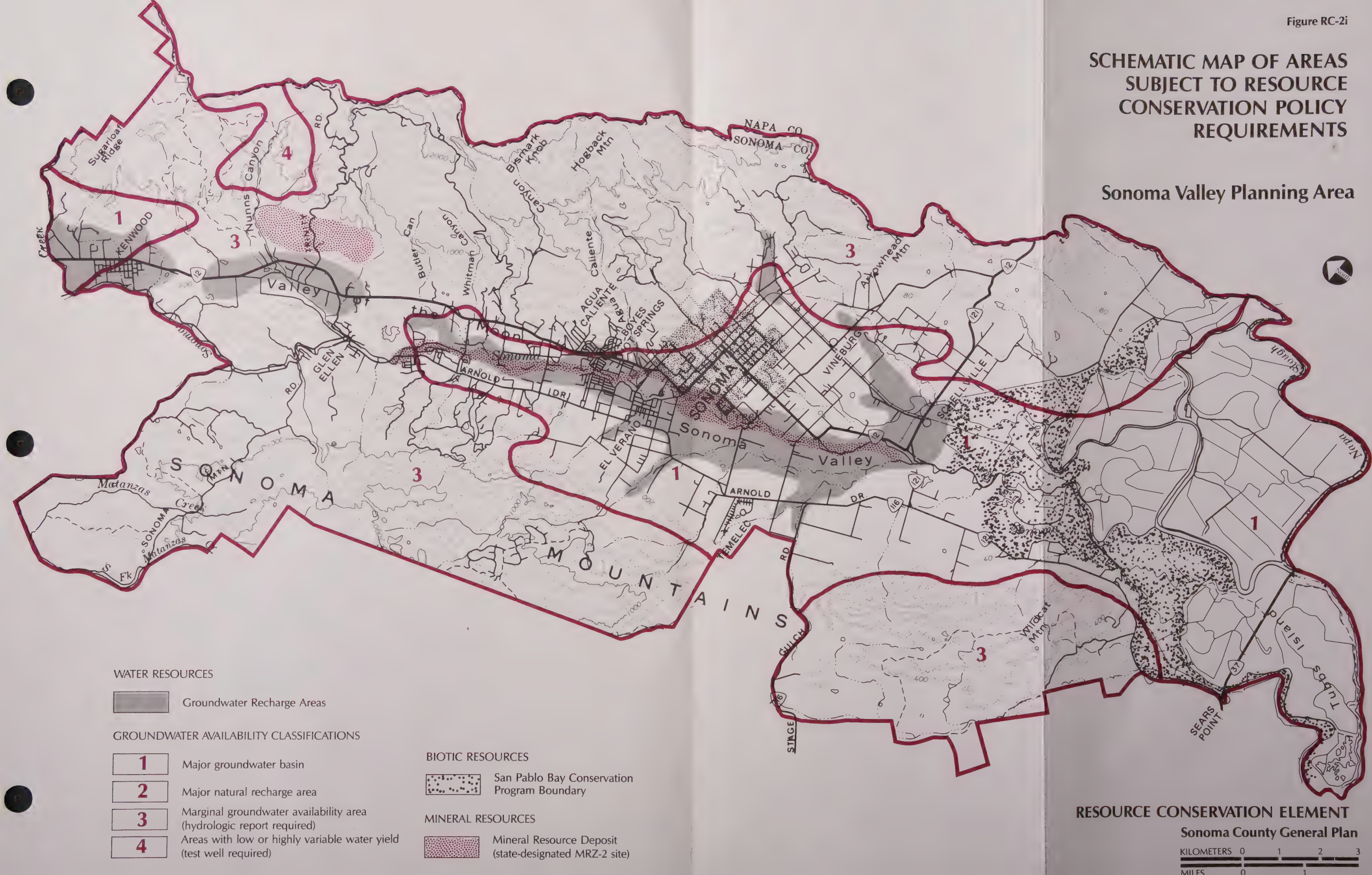






# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Sonoma Valley Planning Area











**PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California 95403**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE

The Public Safety Element is intended to protect the community from unreasonable risks from seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche and dam failure, slope instability leading to mudslides, landslides, subsidence and other known geologic hazards, flooding and fire. It includes maps of known hazards and assesses evacuation routes, water supply needs, road widths, clearances around structures and other items related to potential catastrophic events.

The Public Safety Element establishes policies to minimize potential property damage and human injury by reducing the exposure of persons and property to the above hazards and to hazardous materials. Acceptable levels of risk are based upon the nature of each hazard, the frequency of exposure, the number of persons exposed, and the potential damage.

The policies in this element are intended to avoid development which would adversely affect future residents and visitors as well as adjacent property and residents. It is also intended that an undue financial burden not be placed on the taxpayer by allowing development which may have unusually high costs for public services and disaster relief.

### 1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

The natural hazards contained in this Element have been considered in the preparation of the Land Use Element. The Land Use Element limits the range of land uses allowed in hazardous areas in order to reduce the number of people and buildings exposed to risk. Public Safety Element policies are also coordinated with the policies of the Open Space, Resource Conservation, Housing, Public Facilities, and Circulation and Transit Elements.

### 1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION

This element contains sections on geologic hazards, flood hazards, fire hazards, and hazardous materials. Each section describes the extent of the hazard, the risk of damage and means of protection. An implementation program is also included.

### 1.4 DETERMINATION OF ACCEPTABLE RISKS

The County is not able to guarantee that any particular development will not, at some time in the future, be adversely affected by the hazards identified in this element because such hazards, by their nature, defy precise prediction.

In those instances where there is a significant factual question about whether a particular development has mitigated risks from natural hazards to an "acceptable" level and the property owner wishes to proceed in the face of such factual question, the County may require the owner of the property to provide indemnification to the County, insurance or other security and a recorded notice which will protect the interests of the County and provide notice of the potential problem to future purchasers.

## 2.0 PROTECTION FROM GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

### 2.1 GEOLOGIC HAZARDS IN SONOMA COUNTY

#### 2.1.1 Seismic Hazards

**Fault Movement:** Earthquakes are usually caused by sudden movement along geologic faults. Sonoma County faults are part of the San Andreas fault system which extends along the California coast. The known



geologic faults in Sonoma County are shown on Figures PS-1a through PS-1i (pages 261 through 277). All show evidence of movement during the past 2 million years and are considered to be potentially active.

**Earthquakes:** Since 1855, more than 140 earthquakes have been felt in the Santa Rosa area. The 1906 earthquake caused 61 deaths and major damage in Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Healdsburg and other communities. The last major earthquake in Sonoma County was the 5.7 magnitude event on the Healdsburg fault in Santa Rosa in 1969. Analysis of seismic data indicates that 8.5 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes can be expected for the San Andreas and the Healdsburg-Rodgers Creek faults respectively. Earthquakes of 8.0 or more on the San Andreas fault can be expected every 50 to 200 years.

**Groundshaking:** Groundshaking from earthquakes affects the most people and can cause the most damage of any geologic hazard. The amount of ground shaking depends on the magnitude of the earthquake, the distance from the epicenter and the type of earth materials in between. ABAG maps showing the groundshaking hazard in Sonoma County are on file at the Planning Department. Groundshaking similar to that which took place in Santa Rosa during the 1969 earthquake can be expected somewhere in Sonoma County once every 20-30 years.

**Ground Failure:** Damage from groundshaking can be increased by liquefaction and landslides. Liquefaction changes water-saturated soil to a semi-liquid state, removing support from foundations and causing buildings to sink. The most hazardous areas are valleys and tidal marshes with high water tables and sandy soils. Landslides can result from groundshaking and may occur in areas of gentle slopes due to liquefaction of subsurface materials.

**Ground Displacement Along Fault Traces:** During the 1906 earthquake horizontal displacement along the San Andreas fault averaged 15 feet in Sonoma County. The Healdsburg, Rodgers Creek and Maacama faults also show evidence of surface displacement during the past 11,000 years.

**Tsunamis:** Tsunamis are large ocean waves caused by undersea earthquakes or landslides. They travel up to 400 mph and can arrive at a coastline before local warnings can be given. The area covered by a tsunami is determined by water depth, underwater topography, and shape of the coastline. A tsunami expected once in 200 years would flood the coast and bay shoreline up to 20 feet above sea level.

**Secondary Effects of Earthquakes:** Earthquake damage to utilities and other public facilities can produce disastrous secondary effects. Much of the destruction from the 1906 earthquake was from fires which could not be put out due to broken water lines, damaged roads and lack of communications. These secondary effects can be reduced by various methods but larger facilities and population growth increase the potential damage.

Downstream flooding may result from dam failure. Warm Springs Dam is located on a medium-sized fault but was designed to absorb the maximum expected displacement and groundshaking from any fault in the region.

## **2.1.2 Landslides**

The most common type of ground failure in Sonoma County is landslides, the downslope movements of soil and/or rock materials. Extensive land areas of the county are subject to this hazard and are shown on Figures PS-1a through PS-1i (pages 261 through 277). Landslides can be triggered by heavy rainfall, earthquakes or human activities such as road cuts, grading, construction, removal of vegetation, and changes in drainage.

## **2.1.3 Expansive Soils**

Buildings, utilities and roads can be damaged by clay-rich soils which swell each winter and shrink each summer depending upon the rainfall. This is a less obvious hazard than earthquakes or landslides, but the gradual cracking, settling and weakening of older buildings is significant in total. Soils with high clay content are found in many valley areas which are planned for development.

## **2.2 PLANNING ISSUES**

### **2.2.1 Assessment of Hazards and Risks**

Figures PS-1a through PS-1i show data from detailed maps on file in the Planning Department. The large file maps are to be used in the review of projects and are incorporated by reference herein.

State law requires a geologic report for projects along known active faults. "Special Studies" zones have been designated along four faults in Sonoma County where surface movement has taken place during the past 11,000 years.

### **2.2.2 Development Planning and Regulation**

Reducing risks of damage and injury to acceptable levels requires special permit review procedures and construction standards. Construction must meet the standards of the Uniform Building Code for seismic resistance, site stability, grading and geologic studies. Dams, schools, hospitals and power plants are specially regulated by state and federal agencies for protection against such hazards.

Land uses vary in their sensitivity to geologic hazards. Agriculture and timber management are considered appropriate in areas subject to geologic hazards because such uses require few occupied structures. Structures should not be placed on known landslides or faults and, when located close to these features, may need special design to withstand damage. Schools, utility structures, hospitals, and powerplants are especially sensitive to geologic hazards.

## **2.3 REDUCTION OF POTENTIAL DAMAGE FROM GEOLOGIC HAZARDS**

**Goal PS-1** Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of damage or injury from earthquakes, landslides and other geologic hazards.

**Objective PS-1.1** Continue to utilize available data on geologic hazards and associated risks.

**Objective PS-1.2** Regulate new development to reduce the risks of damage and injury from known geologic hazards to acceptable levels.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, to achieve these objectives:**

**PS-1a:** Continue to utilize all available data on geologic hazards and related risks from the appropriate agencies.

**PS-1b:** Continue to utilize studies of geologic hazards prepared during the development review process.

**PS-1c:** Consider amendments of this Element to incorporate new data which significantly change the hazard assessments contained herein.

**PS-1d:** Encourage research on geologic hazards, their probabilities and their effects within Sonoma County.

**PS-1e:** Prepare a "geologic hazard area" combining district. Consider establishing limits on permissible uses and including standards for permitted development.

**PS-1f:** Require and review geologic reports prior to decisions on any project which would subject property or persons to significant risks from the geologic hazards shown on Figures PS-1a through PS-1i (pages 261 through 277) and related file maps and source documents. Geologic reports shall describe the hazards and include mitigation measures to reduce risks to acceptable levels. Where appropriate, require an engineer's



or geologist's certification that risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level and, if indicated, obtain indemnification or insurance from the engineer, geologist, or developer to minimize County exposure to liability.

**PS-1g:** Prohibit structures intended for human occupancy (or defined as a "project" in the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act and related Administrative Code provisions) within 50 feet of the surface trace of any fault.

**PS-1h:** Adopt, upon approval by the International Congress of Building Officials and the State of California, revisions to the Uniform Building Code which increase resistance of structures to groundshaking and other geologic hazards.

**PS-1i:** Require dynamic analysis of structural response to earthquake forces prior to County approval of building permits for structures whose irregularity or other factors prevent reasonable load determination and distribution by static analysis.

**PS-1j:** Encourage strong enforcement of state seismic safety requirements for design and construction of dams, powerplants, hospitals and schools.

**PS-1k:** Roads, public facilities and other County projects should incorporate measures to mitigate identified geologic hazards to acceptable levels.

### **3.0 PROTECTION FROM FLOOD HAZARDS**

#### **3.1 FLOOD HAZARDS IN SONOMA COUNTY**

Streams overflow banks when runoff from the watershed exceeds the capacity of the stream channel to carry it. Floods on small streams usually peak and recede quickly, while floods on the lower Russian River may not peak for two days or more after the start of a storm and may exceed floodstage for four days or more. Flood hazards are estimated by the area flooded by the maximum storm event expected over a 100 year period, a 10 year period or some other frequency. Figures PS-1a through PS-1i (pages 261 through 277) show the general extent of peak flooding expected during a 100 year flood for those streams which have been studied. Flooding can move or destroy buildings and wash away soil, crops, and loose objects. Floating debris is a very dangerous hazard. Flood damage may weaken building materials and increase mildew, dust, bacteria and other disease vectors. Public facilities, roads and services may also be affected. A particular concern is the disruption of sewage treatment facilities and resulting water quality impacts.

#### **3.2 PLANNING ISSUES**

##### **3.2.1 Assessment of Hazards and Risks**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Federal Insurance Administration have assessed flood hazards for most major streams in the county. They have prepared maps showing the areas with at least a one percent (1%) chance of being flooded in any year. The approximate boundaries of these areas are shown on Figures PS-1a through PS-1i. The FEMA maps are being revised for the Russian River and Dry Creek due to Warm Springs Dam. The Sonoma County Water Agency has prepared drainage plans for some urbanized areas in the county.

##### **3.2.2 Flood Prevention and Control**

Construction of dams and other improvements is one way to reduce flood hazards. Flood levels in the Russian River basin have been reduced by Coyote Dam and Warm Springs Dam. Flooding in Santa Rosa Creek and its branches has been reduced by five small dams. However, dams and structural improvements are costly, take



a long time to complete, increase sediment buildup and give a false sense of security to floodplain residents. Future flood control activities may include improvements to drainage channels and removal of excess sediments from stream beds.

### **3.2.3 Floodplain Management**

Flooding may also be reduced by proper siting of development, watershed management, retention basins, and similar measures to decrease runoff. These methods reduce the needs for costly construction projects and disaster relief. Land uses which can sustain periodic flooding and which decrease flood hazards downstream are encouraged in floodplains. On the other hand, floodplains are attractive for development because of the availability of water, soil, transportation and visual amenities. Unincorporated communities with development in designated floodplains include Guerneville, Monte Rio, Windsor, Penngrove, Geyserville, Glen Ellen and Cazadero.

Floodplain management is required by federal and state law. Various incentives such as flood insurance, loans and state funding of control projects are offered if flood management practices are followed. A local "hazard mitigation plan" is required by the federal government after aid is requested for a flood disaster. Sonoma County has adopted an ordinance requiring permits for construction in 100 year floodplains.

Floodplain management suggests limits on land uses to agriculture, recreation and other low intensity activities without permanent residences or other occupied structures. However, there may be public benefit from allowing additional development in existing communities in floodplains.

## **3.3 REDUCTION OF POTENTIAL DAMAGE FROM FLOODING**

**Goal PS-2.1** Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of damage or injury from flooding.

**Objective PS-2.1** Maintain complete data on flood hazards.

**Objective PS-2.2** Regulate new development to reduce the risks of damage and injury from known flooding hazards to acceptable levels.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, to achieve these objectives:**

**PS-2a:** Maintain available information on flood hazards in the appropriate County departments.

**PS-2b:** Coordinate flood hazard analysis and management activities with the Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA and other responsible agencies. Request changes in FEMA maps where appropriate to reflect new data or analyses.

**PS-2c:** Base land use planning and development review on FEMA maps and data or parcel specific scaled interpretations of these maps and site specific elevation data.

**PS-2d:** Prepare a comprehensive analysis of the potential flood hazards and drainage impacts associated with adopted land use plans for each major watershed in the County. The County shall work with the incorporated cities to develop basin wide drainage studies and development fees for the purpose of identifying and mitigating the direct and cumulative impact of flooding which results from the loss of permeable surfaces. The County shall use proposed annexations, redevelopment agreements, revenue sharing agreements and the CEQA process as tools to ensure that incorporated development pays its fair share toward the studies and mitigation of downstream flooding impacts caused by upstream development.

Pending completion of the above applicable drainage analyses, individual project applications shall be required to analyze and mitigate drainage impacts, based upon the land use plan, as determined by the

Water Agency. If such analysis identified unmitigated and cumulative significant effects, including impact on downstream flooding, further environmental documentation may be required.

In the event that the Water Agency determines that the project, when considered cumulatively with other projects to be undertaken in the drainage basin, will result in a significant effect with respect to downstream flooding, the project applicant will either: a) prepare a supplemental environmental impact report on such effect, or b) agree to modify the project to construct improvements or participate in a funding mechanism necessary to mitigate any downstream flooding impacts (such as posting a bond on funds prior to recordation of the final map in an amount to be determined by the Water Agency). Failure to modify the project or to propose further environmental documentation shall be grounds for finding the project inconsistent with the plan.

**PS-2e:** Use the 100 year flood event and corresponding elevations as the County measure of acceptable level of risk and protection in the consideration of any amendments of the land use plan map.

**PS-2f:** On-site and off-site flood related hazards shall be reviewed for all projects located within areas subject to known flood hazards.

**PS-2g:** Regulate development, water diversion, vegetation removal, grading and fills to minimize any increase in flooding and related damage to people and property.

**PS-2h:** Payment of costs for drainage facilities to handle the surface runoff from new development shall be the responsibility of developers and others who benefit.

**PS-2i:** Require that design and construction of drainage facilities be subject to the review and approval of the Sonoma County Water Agency.

**PS-2j:** Require that tentative and final subdivision maps and approved site plans show areas subject to flooding as shown on the FEMA maps.

**PS-2k:** Give priority to floodplain management over flood control structures for preventing damage from flooding except where the intensity of development requires a high level of protection and justifies the costs of structural measures.

**PS-2l:** Consider the potential risk of damage from flooding in the design and review of projects, including those which could facilitate floodplain development.

**PS-2m:** The SCWA shall be responsible for prioritizing and undertaking flood hazard mitigation projects on a continuous basis on selected waterways subject to the policies of the Open Space and Resource Conservation Elements.

**PS-2n:** Continue to enforce county code requirements on construction in flood hazard areas and other adopted regulations which implement the National Flood Insurance Program.

**PS-2o:** Avoid variances to building setbacks along streams and in 100 year flood plains without the review and approval of the Sonoma County Water Agency.

**PS-2p:** Limit filling in areas which could retain a significant amount of floodwater.

**PS-2q:** Encourage the timely completion and filing of inundation maps for all dams whose failure could cause loss of life or personal injury within Sonoma County.



## **4.0 PROTECTION FROM FIRE HAZARDS**

### **4.1 WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS IN SONOMA COUNTY**

The combination of highly flammable fuel, long dry summers and steep slopes creates a significant natural hazard of large wildland fires in many areas of Sonoma County. Wildland fire results in death, injury, economic losses and a large public investment in fire fighting efforts. Woodlands and other natural vegetation are destroyed resulting in the loss of timber, wildlife habitat, scenic quality and recreation. Soil erosion, sedimentation of fisheries and reservoirs, and downstream flooding can also result.

Most damage results from a few large fires in the dry weather months. There were 42 wildland fires of 100 acres or more in the county between 1965 and 1984.

Fire hazard severity has been mapped by the California Department of Forestry (CDF). Areas with a high or very high risk are shown in Figures PS-1a through PS-1i on pages 261 through 277 and include over half of the county. The highest hazard is found in mountainous areas with dry summers, plenty of fuel, and steep slopes.

Residences have increased the number of fires in hazardous rural areas. Human activities now account for 9 out of 10 wildland fires. Residences in rural areas cause fire suppression agencies to devote limited resources to structural protection while the wildfire spreads.

The probability of large damaging fires in urban areas is affected by weather conditions and the spread of fires in surrounding wildland areas. The type of construction, preventive measures, and the extent of fire suppression services are the chief factors which determine how far these fires spread.

## **4.2 PLANNING ISSUES**

### **4.2.1 Assessment of Hazards and Risks**

Fire hazards shown on Figures PS-1a through PS-1i are only a general picture of the actual hazard because of the size of the areas and differences in vegetation and slope. The maps show the fire hazards only in unincorporated areas which are classified as "wildlands" and are therefore within the "State Responsibility Area" served by CDF.

Project review should include an assessment of wildlife fire potential and needed mitigation measures. This assessment is important for residential uses, public facilities multi-story and contiguous buildings, mobile homes, and uses of flammable substances or explosives.

### **4.2.2 Land Use Planning**

In order to reduce the risk of fire damage in rural areas, the types and intensities of land uses should be limited. Wildland fire hazards may be reduced by mitigation measures including the removal of vegetation and installation of dependable water systems, but cannot be eliminated entirely. Rural development should be most restricted where natural fire hazards are high, fire protection is limited, and road access prevents timely response by firefighting personnel and rapid evacuation by residents.

### **4.2.3 Development Standards**

Fire hazard regulations are intended to minimize on-site property damage and personal injury, avoid damage to adjacent properties and reduce the cost of fire suppression services. Increasing "built-in" fire protection in new construction is the most cost effective way of achieving these objectives. All development must have adequate water available for fire suppression, whether from a hydrant and community system or from an on-site storage tank.



Where development is permitted near wildlands and natural vegetation, the fire hazard must be further mitigated by other measures. The locations of subdivision lots and building envelopes can maximize access by emergency vehicles and minimize construction in steep or wooded areas. Fire retardant roof materials are now required in high hazard areas. Preventing the spread of wildland fires to and from structures also requires removal of surrounding vegetation and clearing of fuel breaks.

Fire safety standards adopted by the County include the Uniform Fire Code, National Fire Code, Uniform Building Code and companion codes, and the subdivision and zoning ordinances. Differences in code requirements, staffing and training among local fire districts prompted the formation of the Sonoma County Department of Fire Services in 1985. The Department's Fire Marshal reviews projects and assists local fire districts in adoption and enforcement of fire safety codes. Improvements in standards for road design, water supply and sprinkler systems could increase the effectiveness of local fire protection services.

CDF enforces requirements for fire fighting and prevention, works with landowners on controlled burns, and advises rural residents on fire prevention methods. Minimum fire safety standards for wildland areas are now being prepared.

#### **4.3 REDUCTION OF POTENTIAL DAMAGE FROM WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS**

**GOAL PS-3.1** Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of damage or injury from wildland and structural fires.

**Objective PS-3.1** Continue to utilize complete data on wildland and urban fire hazards.

**Objective PS-3.2** Regulate new development to reduce the risks of damage and injury from known fire hazards to acceptable levels.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, to achieve the above objectives:**

**PS-3a:** Continue to utilize available information on wildland and structural fire hazards.

**PS-3b:** Consider the severity of natural fire hazards, potential damage from wildland and structural fires, adequacy of fire protection and mitigation measures consistent with this element in the review of projects.

**PS-3c:** Adopt revisions to the Uniform Fire and Building Codes which address fire safety after they are approved by inspection organizations and the State of California.

**PS-3d:** Require on-site detection and suppression, including automatic sprinkler systems, where available services do not provide acceptable levels of protection.

**PS-3e:** Refer projects and code revisions to the Department of Fire Services and responsible fire protection agency and consider their comments.

**PS-3f:** The Department of Fire Services shall offer assistance to local agencies in adoption and enforcement of fire safety regulations and shall work with local agencies to develop proposed improvements to county codes and standards.

**PS-3g:** Encourage strong enforcement of state requirements for fire safety by the California Department of Forestry.

**PS-3h:** Encourage continued operation of CDF programs for fuel breaks, brush management, controlled burning, revegetation and fire roads.

**PS-3i:** Incorporate the fire safety standards recommended in CDF's "Fire Safety Guides" into County development standards when adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

## **5.0 PROTECTION FROM HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

### **5.1 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN SONOMA COUNTY**

Many man-made substances can be hazardous to health. The increased use of such materials has increased potential hazards and actual damage. Public concerns have led to tighter controls on the production, transport, storage, sale and use of hazardous materials and, particularly, on the handling and disposal of concentrated residues and wastes produced by power plants and other industrial operations.

Hazardous materials are found at many locations in Sonoma County. The electrical generating plants in the Geysers geothermal area use and produce hazardous materials hauled on winding mountain roads. Spills and releases of such materials have occurred.

Petroleum fuels get into ground water and surface water, particularly from underground tanks. Prevention of hazardous materials in the County's solid waste landfills and transfer stations and industrial operations is important because these materials could affect water quality.

### **5.2 PLANNING ISSUES**

The management of hazardous materials is included in this element because it has become a major public safety issue requiring significant resources and attention by local agencies.

While different agencies have different responsibilities in the regulation of hazardous materials, the Health Department has been designated as the lead agency for preparation of a comprehensive hazardous materials management plan, including the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan now in the draft stage.

### **5.3 REDUCTION OF POTENTIAL DAMAGE FROM HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

**Goal PS-4** Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of damage or injury from hazardous materials.

**Objective PS-4.1** Maintain complete documentation and assessments of data on hazardous materials.

**Objective PS-4.2** Regulate the transport, storage, use and disposal of hazardous materials in order to reduce the risks of damage and injury from hazardous materials to acceptable levels.

**The County shall use the following policies to achieve these objectives.**

**PS-4a:** While maintaining the autonomy granted to it pursuant to State zoning laws, implement State and County requirements for the storage, transport, disposal and use of hazardous materials, including requirements for management plans, security precautions, and contingency plans.

**PS-4b:** Prepare and maintain an inventory of sites with storage or use of significant quantities of hazardous materials.

**PS-4c:** Require a use permit for any commercial or industrial use involving significant quantities of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials management plans shall be required as a condition of approval for such permits.

**PS-4d:** Where allowed by law, regulate the transportation of hazardous materials to minimize the potential for damage. Seek regulation by other agencies consistent with adopted County policies.



**PS-4e:** Continue to design and operate county-owned solid waste disposal facilities to prevent disposal of and contamination by hazardous materials.

**PS-4f:** Establish a hazardous materials advisory group composed of citizens and representatives of public agencies, businesses and other groups.

**PS-4g:** Prepare a draft "Hazardous Materials Management Plan" which provides for the long term prevention of releases of hazardous materials, effective responses to such releases, the safe transport and disposal of hazardous wastes, and a public information program.

**PS-4h:** Avoid siting of hazardous waste repositories, incinerators, or similar facilities intended primarily for hazardous waste disposal in any area subject to a natural hazard identified on Figures PS-1a through PS-1i in this element.

**PS-4i:** Avoid siting of hazardous waste repositories, incinerators or similar facilities intended primarily for hazardous waste disposal in any area designated for urban residential or rural residential use or on agricultural lands.

**PS-4j:** Site hazardous waste facilities which have the primary purpose of reuse, recycling, or source reduction of hazardous wastes in areas designated for industrial use in close proximity to users of hazardous materials and/or generators of hazardous wastes.

## **6.0 PUBLIC SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

### **Public Safety Program 1: Safety Hazards Information System / Related Plan and Zoning Amendments**

**Program Description:** Log and maintain records of all mapping and reports regarding geologic and flood hazards information prepared for project applications and by other sources. Use the information in assessing constraints. Revise plans and zoning as appropriate.

### **Public Safety Program 2: "Floodplain" and "Geologic Hazard Area" Zoning Combining Districts.**

**Program Description:** Prepare amendments to Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County code to: 1) revise flood plain zoning restrictions in conformance with Chapter 7 of the Sonoma County Code and 2) include a "geologic hazard area" combining district which establishes regulations for permissible types of uses and their intensities and appropriate development standards.

### **Public Safety Program 3: Drainage, Erosion, and Fire Safety Standards for Subdivisions**

**Program Description:** Prepare amendments to Chapter 25 of the Sonoma County Code to clarify standards for drainage, erosion control and fire safety.







Figure PS-1a

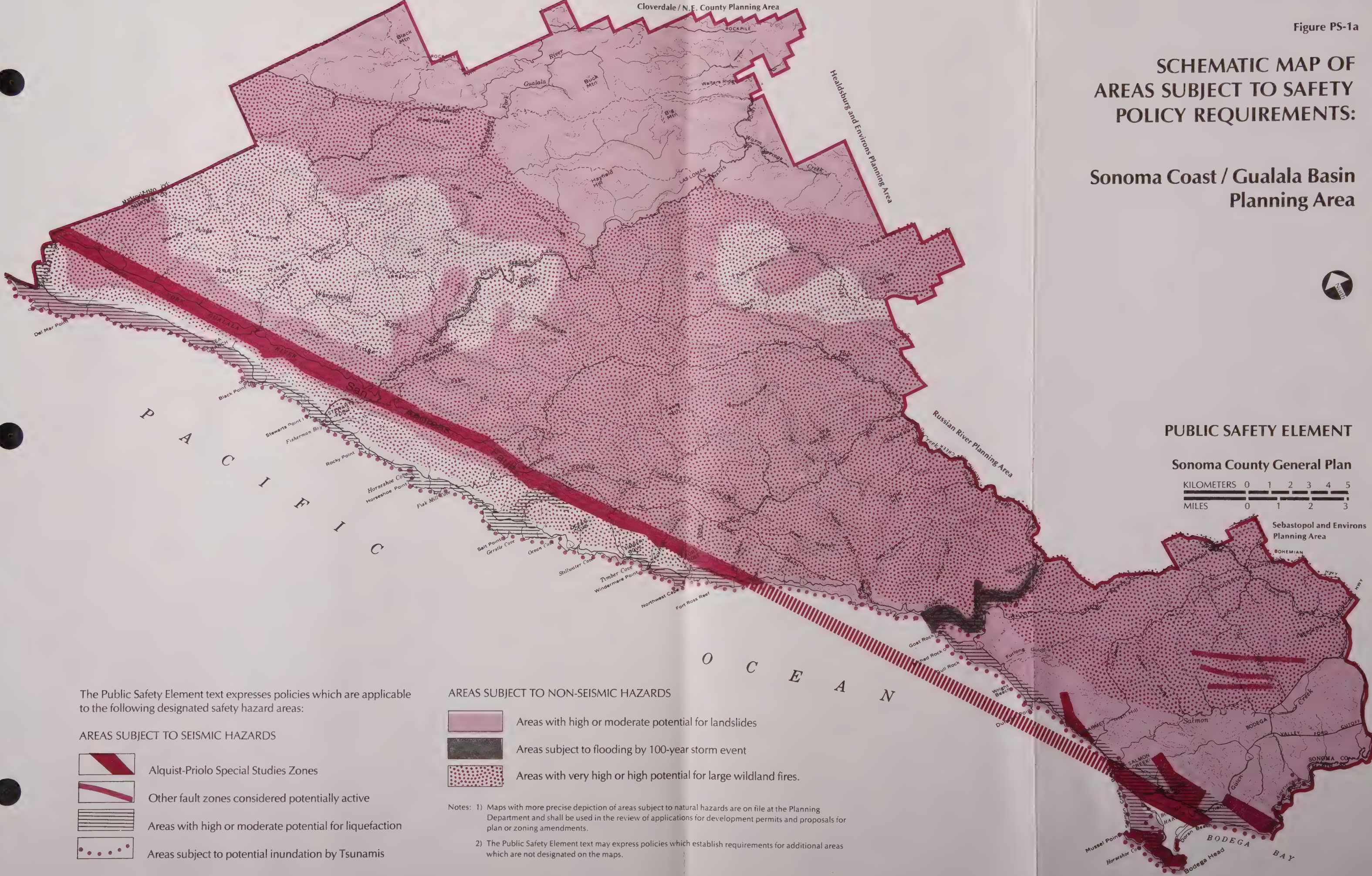
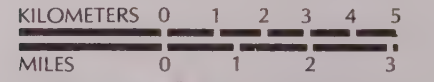
# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

## Sonoma Coast / Gualala Basin Planning Area



### PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

#### Sonoma County General Plan



The Public Safety Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated safety hazard areas:

#### AREAS SUBJECT TO SEISMIC HAZARDS

- Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones
- Other fault zones considered potentially active
- Areas with high or moderate potential for liquefaction
- Areas subject to potential inundation by Tsunamis

#### AREAS SUBJECT TO NON-SEISMIC HAZARDS

- Areas with high or moderate potential for landslides
- Areas subject to flooding by 100-year storm event
- Areas with very high or high potential for large wildland fires.

Notes: 1) Maps with more precise depiction of areas subject to natural hazards are on file at the Planning Department and shall be used in the review of applications for development permits and proposals for plan or zoning amendments.  
2) The Public Safety Element text may express policies which establish requirements for additional areas which are not designated on the maps.

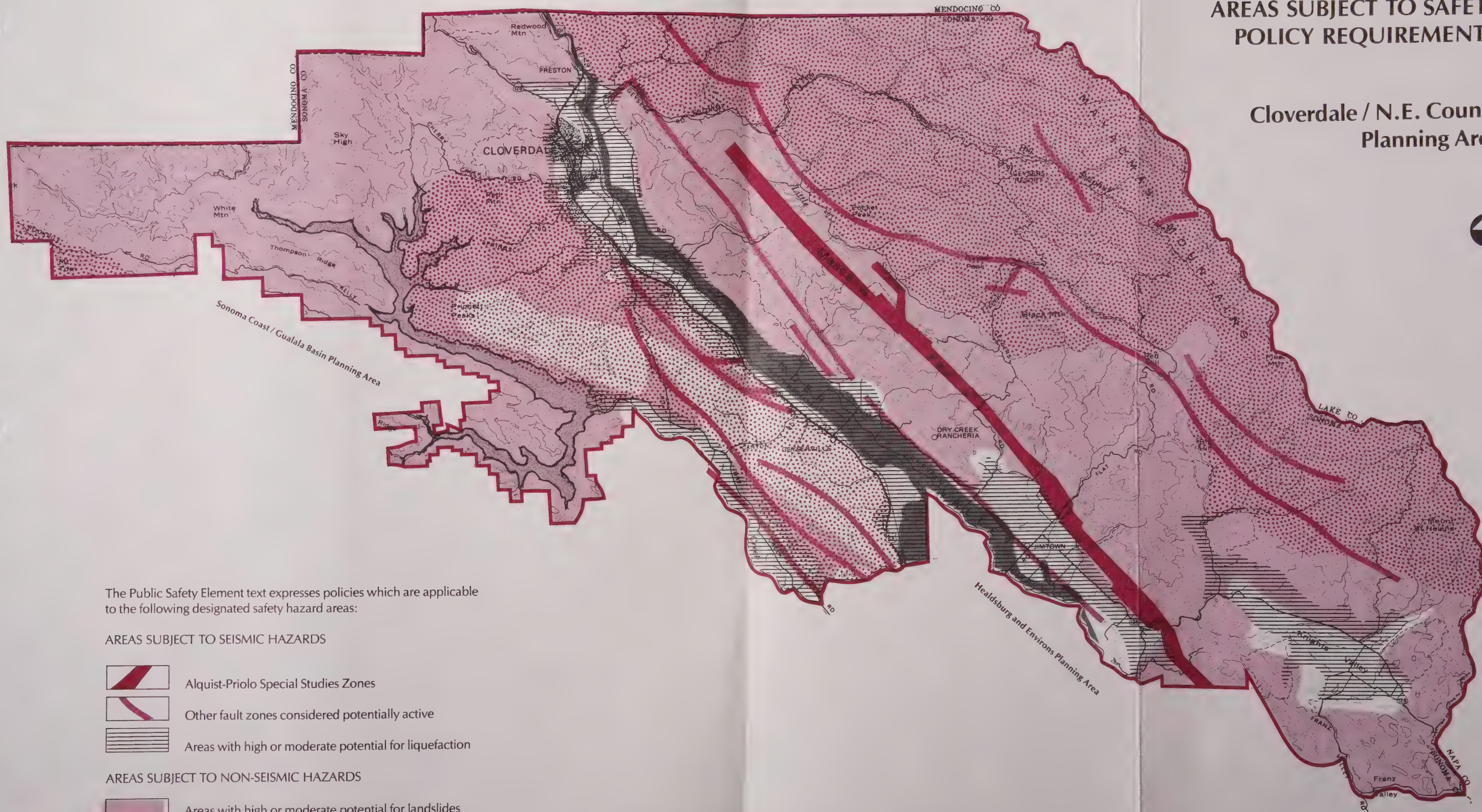









# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

## Cloverdale / N.E. County Planning Area

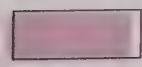




The Public Safety Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated safety hazard areas:

### AREAS SUBJECT TO SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones
-  Other fault zones considered potentially active
-  Areas with high or moderate potential for liquefaction

### AREAS SUBJECT TO NON-SEISMIC HAZARDS

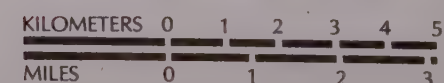
-  Areas with high or moderate potential for landslides
-  Areas subject to flooding by 100-year storm event
-  Areas with very high or high potential for large wildland fires.

Notes: 1) Maps with more precise depiction of areas subject to natural hazards are on file at the Planning Department and shall be used in the review of applications for development permits and proposals for plan or zoning amendments.

2) The Public Safety Element text may express policies which establish requirements for additional areas which are not designated on the maps.

## PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

### Sonoma County General Plan











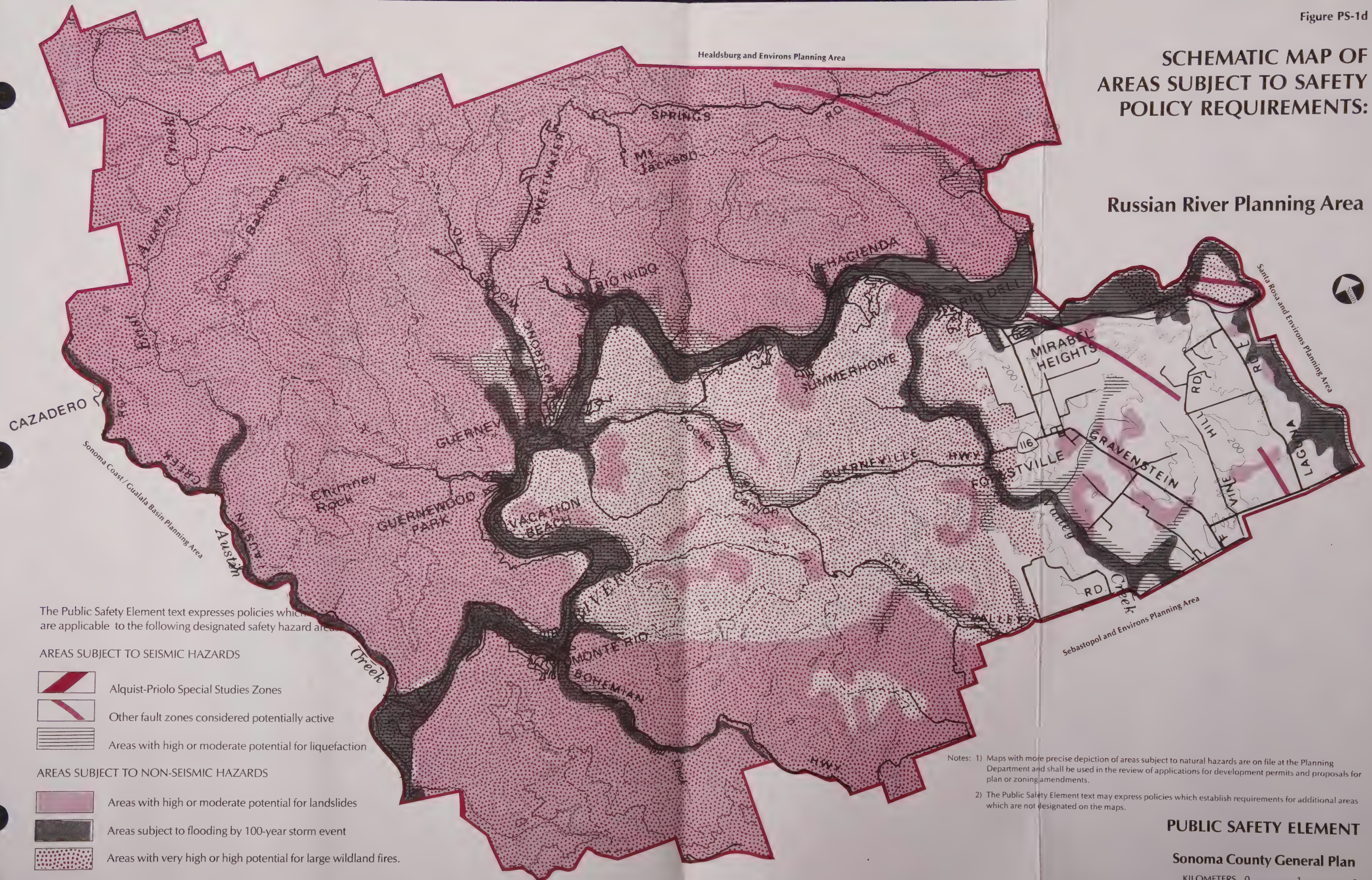








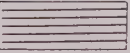
# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

## Russian River Planning Area






The Public Safety Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated safety hazard areas:

### AREAS SUBJECT TO SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones
-  Other fault zones considered potentially active
-  Areas with high or moderate potential for liquefaction

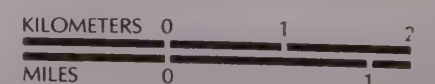
### AREAS SUBJECT TO NON-SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Areas with high or moderate potential for landslides
-  Areas subject to flooding by 100-year storm event
-  Areas with very high or high potential for large wildland fires.

- Notes: 1) Maps with more precise depiction of areas subject to natural hazards are on file at the Planning Department and shall be used in the review of applications for development permits and proposals for plan or zoning amendments.
- 2) The Public Safety Element text may express policies which establish requirements for additional areas which are not designated on the maps.

## PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

### Sonoma County General Plan



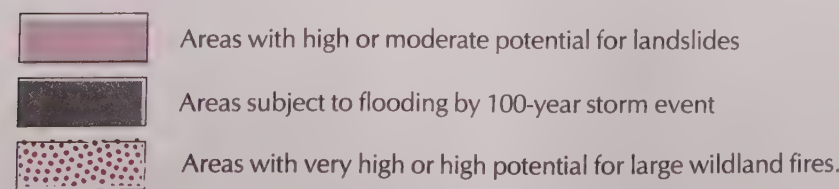






## SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

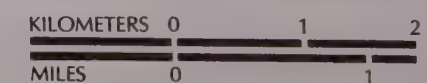
# Santa Rosa and Environs Planning Area















# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

Rohnert Park –  
Cotati and Environs  
Planning Area

Santa Rosa and Environs Planning Area



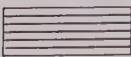
Sebastopol and Environs Planning Area

Petaluma and Environs Planning Area




- Notes: 1) Maps with more precise depiction of areas subject to natural hazards are on file at the Planning Department and shall be used in the review of applications for development permits and proposals for plan or zoning amendments.
- 2) The Public Safety Element text may express policies which establish requirements for additional areas which are not designated on the maps.

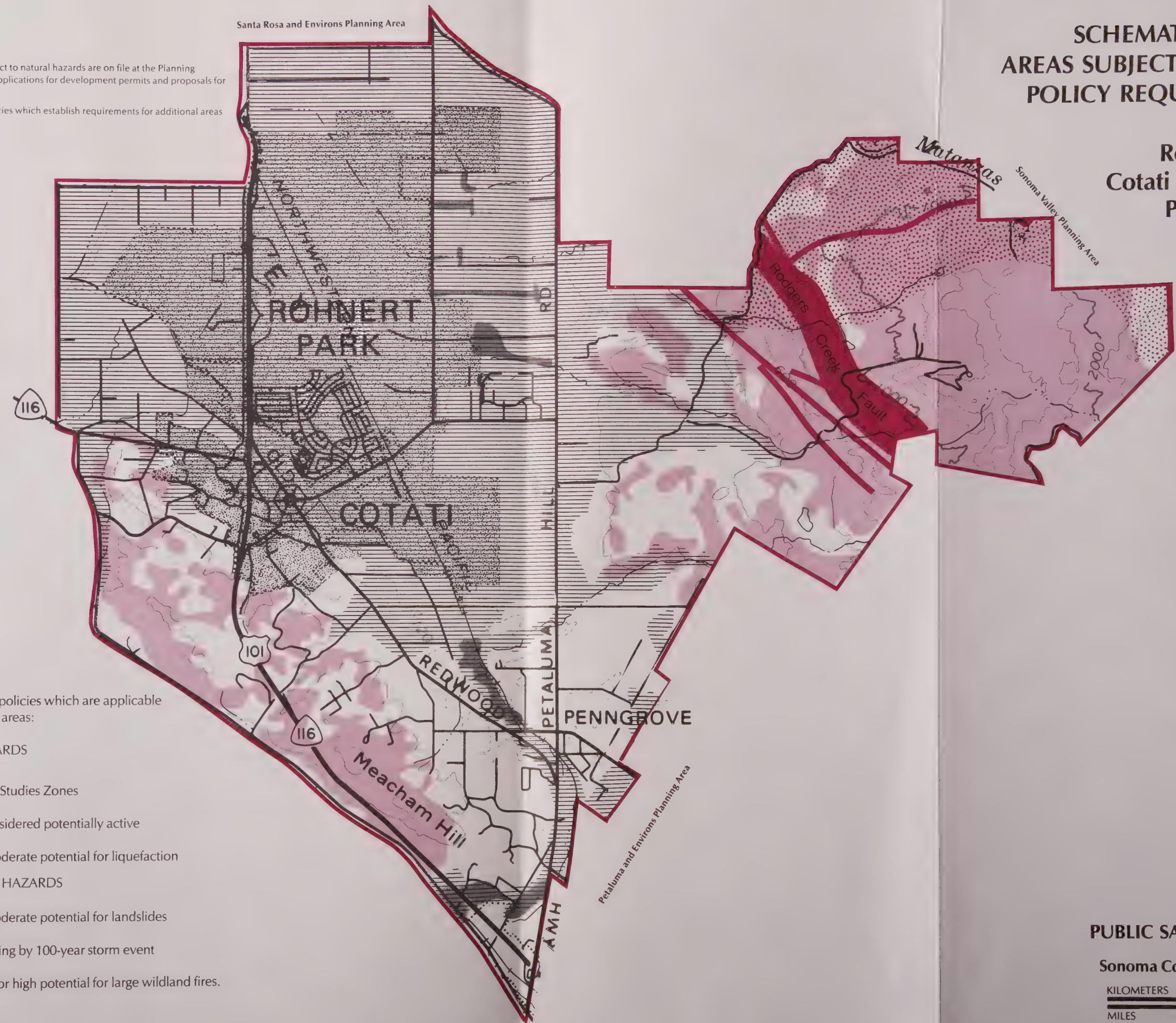
The Public Safety Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated safety hazard areas:

## AREAS SUBJECT TO SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones
-  Other fault zones considered potentially active
-  Areas with high or moderate potential for liquefaction

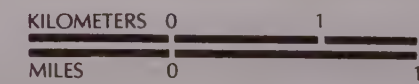
## AREAS SUBJECT TO NON-SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Areas with high or moderate potential for landslides
-  Areas subject to flooding by 100-year storm event
-  Areas with very high or high potential for large wildland fires.



## PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

Sonoma County General Plan

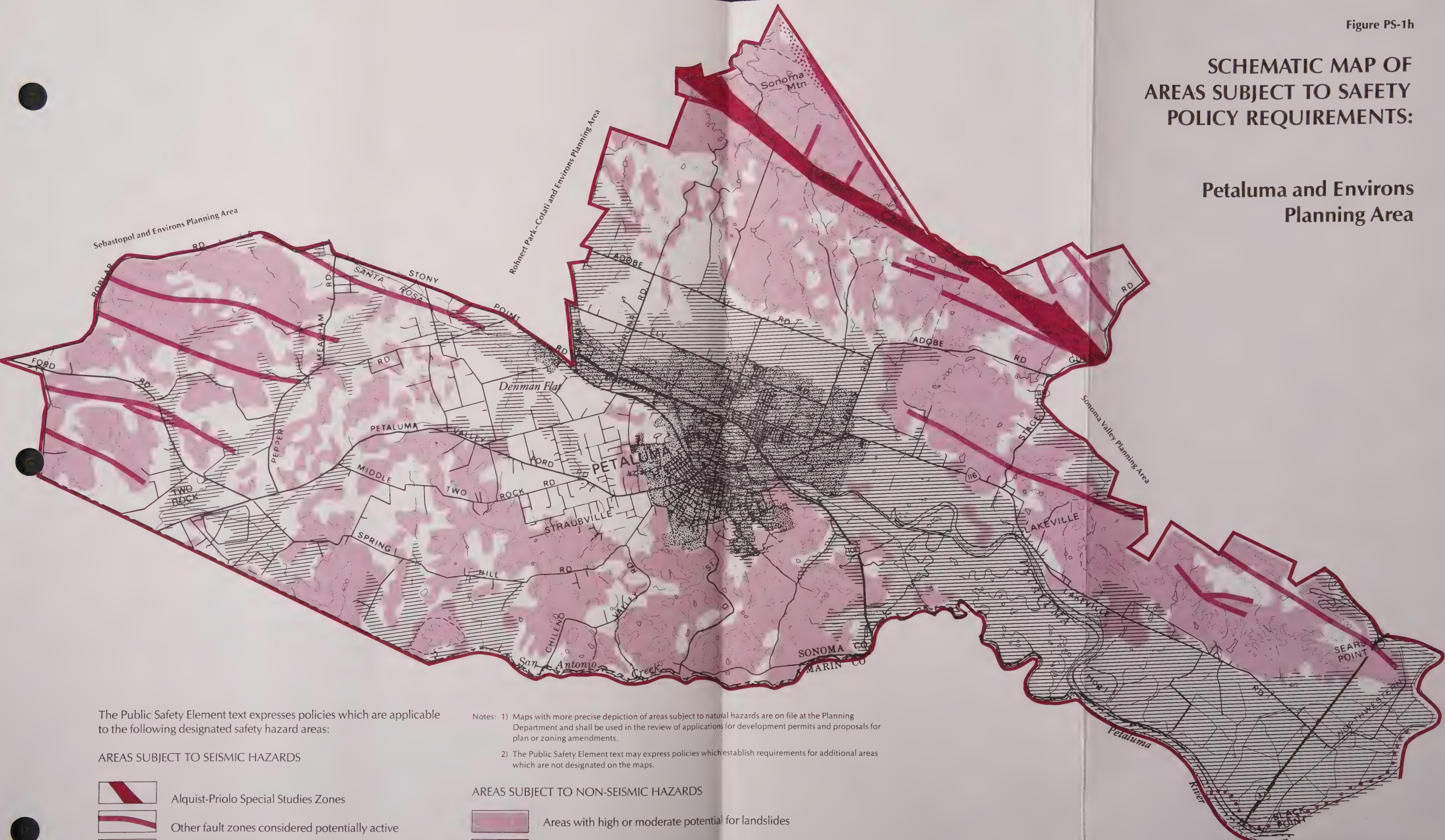










SCHEMATIC MAP OF  
AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY  
POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

Petaluma and Environs  
Planning Area



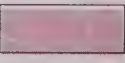
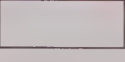

The Public Safety Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated safety hazard areas:

AREAS SUBJECT TO SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones
-  Other fault zones considered potentially active
-  Areas with high or moderate potential for liquefaction
-  Areas subject to potential inundation by Tsunamis

- Notes: 1) Maps with more precise depiction of areas subject to natural hazards are on file at the Planning Department and shall be used in the review of applications for development permits and proposals for plan or zoning amendments.
- 2) The Public Safety Element text may express policies which establish requirements for additional areas which are not designated on the maps.

AREAS SUBJECT TO NON-SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Areas with high or moderate potential for landslides
-  Areas subject to flooding by 100-year storm event
-  Areas with very high or high potential for large wildland fires.

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

Sonoma County General Plan









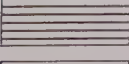

# SCHEMATIC MAP OF AREAS SUBJECT TO SAFETY POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

## Sonoma Valley Planning Area

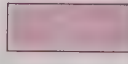




The Public Safety Element text expresses policies which are applicable to the following designated safety hazard areas:

### AREAS SUBJECT TO SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones
-  Other fault zones considered potentially active
-  Areas with high or moderate potential for liquefaction
-  Areas subject to potential inundation by Tsunamis

### AREAS SUBJECT TO NON-SEISMIC HAZARDS

-  Areas with high or moderate potential for landslides
-  Areas subject to flooding by 100-year storm event
-  Areas with very high or high potential for large wildland fires.

- Notes: 1) Maps with more precise depiction of areas subject to natural hazards are on file at the Planning Department and shall be used in the review of applications for development permits and proposals for plan or zoning amendments.
- 2) The Public Safety Element text may express policies which establish requirements for additional areas which are not designated on the maps.

## PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

### Sonoma County General Plan















**CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California 95403**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The Circulation Element must address the location and extent of existing and planned transportation routes and facilities. It is correlated with the land use element to assure that the transportation system serves future travel demand and helps attain the desired land use plan.

Current traffic congestion in Sonoma County has resulted from a combination of factors. Growth in employment and population has increased the number of people using the County's transportation system, particularly its roadways. Changes in transportation patterns have occurred in response to changes in fuel and vehicle costs, congestion, commuting patterns and recreational use. Most importantly, the public continues to prefer the automobile as the primary means of travel.

While the demand for mobility has increased, money for road and transit system improvements has dwindled. In addition, construction of improvements is often opposed by area residents due to environmental concerns, a desire for neighborhood preservation, or the fear that increased roadway capacity will spur unwanted growth and more congestion in the long run.

The transportation system outlined in this Circulation Element recognizes the likely limitations of funding as well as the growth inducing potential of excessive capacity in areas not planned for growth. However, the County must be aggressive in obtaining revenue for needed improvements. To do less, even without the growth in the unincorporated area allowed in the general plan, will further strain county and city road capacities and reduce the mobility and quality of life expected in Sonoma County.

The Circulation and Transit Element includes a plan for future transportation facilities that will 1) help accomplish the planned pattern of future land uses, 2) not be growth inducing, 3) serve the needs of all population groups and enable transport of goods and materials, and 4) contribute to environmental quality and achieve environmental goals. Major considerations in the plan policies are the efficient use of existing facilities and the high cost of improvements.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

This element and its implementing measures are coordinated with the land use element in the following manner:

1. The Circulation and Transit Element uses the Land Use Element projections of future population and economic growth.
2. Projections of future travel demand are based upon the land use element distribution of future population and economic activity by Planning Area.
3. The transportation plan and policies are designed to support the land use plan, maps, objectives and policies which emphasize city-centered development and limited growth in rural areas.

Other elements also address transportation facilities. The Air Transportation Element contains policies regarding air transportation services. Bikeways are addressed primarily in the Open Space Element. Projected noise contours for highway sources are included in the Noise Element. Air quality policies in the Resource Conservation Element take into account the projected traffic volumes and conditions on area highways.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

The element contains seven sections: 1) a summary of existing and projected future traffic conditions, problems, and needs, 2) general goals and policies for the transportation system. Goals, objectives and policies for: 3) highways, 4) transit services, 5) Transportation System Management (TSM), 6) planned transportation improvements in each of the nine planning areas, and 7) an implementation program.



## 2.0 EXISTING AND PROJECTED FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

### 2.1 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONDITIONS IN 1984

In 1984 components of the countywide transportation system consisted of several federal and state highways, including two freeways; numerous county routes, rural and urban highways, several local and regional transit systems, paratransit services, and rail freight service. Travel within the county is affected by residential and work locations and by regional activity centers. Travel patterns are also influenced by work trips to Marin County and downtown San Francisco. The private automobile is the primary means of travel. Transit serves the commute to San Francisco and Marin but is otherwise limited primarily to people without access to automobiles, the elderly, students, and the physically handicapped.

#### 2.1.1 Existing Transportation Network: 1984

As of 1984 there were approximately 2,375 miles of roads in Sonoma County. Some of these roads serve predominantly local traffic. These include many city-maintained streets and roads and a number of county-maintained roads. Roads serving the County as a whole and serving subareas of the County include six state and federal highways, numerous county-maintained roads, and several important city-maintained roads. These roadways are components of the countywide highway system and are the subject of this plan.

The Countywide Highway System: The County's highway system is linked to Marin and the San Francisco Bay Area by U.S. Highway 101 (Figure CT-1 on page 284). This route is heavily used by commuters during peak travel periods. Highways 12/121 and 37 connect Sonoma County and Napa. Highway 12/121 is heavily congested at commute periods and on weekends due to tourism and recreational travel. Highway 101 north of Cloverdale, the primary route to Mendocino County, is also congested on weekends from recreational travel.

In addition to the above routes, Sonoma County's highway network includes several other state highways; Highways 116, 128 and 1. It also includes numerous county roads, as well as some streets within cities. Outside of urban areas, most of these roadways are two-lane rural roads.

Several roads could be developed as alternative routes for inter-county travel during peak periods on Highway 101. These parallel arterials are Stony Point Road and Fulton Road to the west and Petaluma Hill Road and Adobe Road to the east.

Transit Network: In 1986, eight transit operators provide fixed-route transit services within Sonoma County. Golden Gate Transit connects the Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Petaluma areas with Marin and San Francisco. Mendocino County Transit Authority connects the Mendocino and Sonoma Coast to Santa Rosa via Bodega Bay and Sebastopol. Sonoma County Transit provides intercity travel within Sonoma County. Local fixed-route bus service is provided by municipal or county transit systems in the cities.

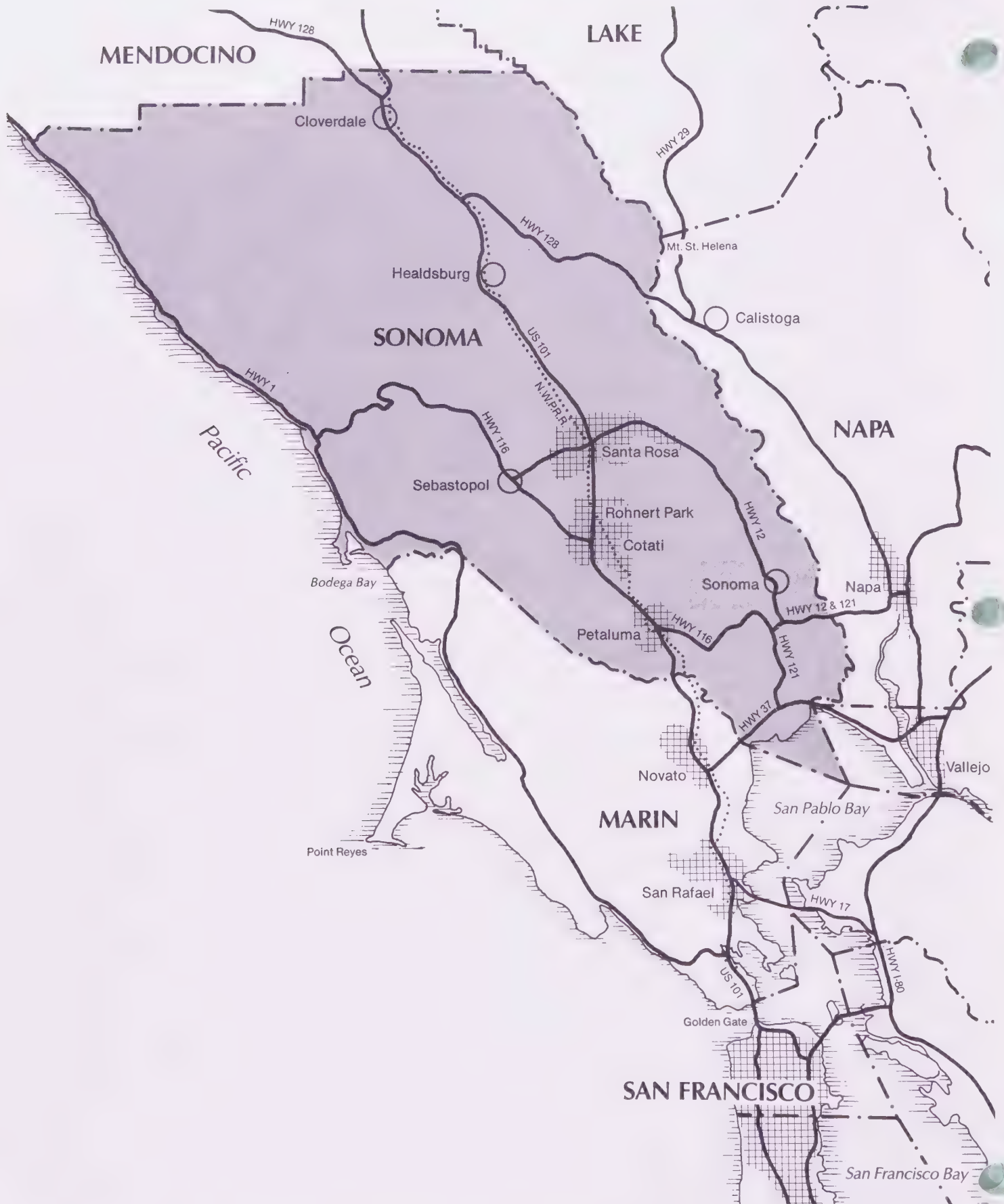
The share of trips made by transit as of 1984 was low, about one percent countywide, but accounted for over 35 percent of the commute trips to San Francisco.

#### 2.1.2 Travel Demand in 1984

Using computer modelling, those trips made on the countywide highway system were evaluated in terms of travel demand; the number of person trips made on an average weekday and during the weekday A.M. peak period. These do not include local trips, those entirely within the same Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ), or trips made on roadways which are not part of the countywide highway system.

The total number of person trips estimated for an average weekday on the countywide highway system was 1,394,700 during 1984. About 17 percent of these trips (239,100) were home based work trips. Another 60 percent (850,400) were home based trips made for other purposes such as school and shopping. The remaining 22 percent were between locations not involving the traveler's home.

Figure CT-1



NORTHBAY REGIONAL HIGHWAY NETWORK



Weekday peak period congestion is primarily caused by commuting. Just over 18 percent of home based work trips were to jobs in other counties, mostly on Highway 101. More than 50 percent of peak period transit riders were traveling to points and destinations outside Sonoma County. However, the out of County commute is only a small part of the total commute picture. Over half of the peak period trips along the 101 corridor between Healdsburg and Petaluma involve internal trips within one of the four planning areas while another 28 percent involve trips between planning areas.

### **2.1.3 Transportation Conditions and Problems in 1984**

Figures CT-2a and CT-2b on pages 287 and 289 show estimated 1984 traffic volumes, levels of service and congestion for an average weekday and average weekday A.M. peak period respectively. Roadways with severe congestion were limited to a few locations, primarily at major U.S. 101 cross-routes in Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Petaluma. Less severe congestion occurred at a number of locations along the Highway 12 and 121 corridors in the Sonoma Valley, along much of U.S. 101 from River Road to the Marin County line, along River Road, along Highway 12 from east Santa Rosa to Sebastopol, along Highway 116 from Sebastopol to Cotati, and along Petaluma Hill Road from Cotati Avenue to Petaluma.

## **2.2 PROJECTED FUTURE TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS**

### **2.2.1 Projected Travel Demand**

Forecasted countywide travel demand for 2005 for the average weekday is 2,090,000 person trips; an increase of 52 percent over 1984 figures. The number of person-trips projected during the peak A.M. commute period is 225,100, an increase of 57 percent over 1984.

Since most traffic congestion occurs during the peak commute periods, forecasts of home based work trips are especially important. About 17.6 percent of home based work trips are projected to be to jobs outside the county, the proportion being 37 percent in the Petaluma region, 32 percent in Rohnert Park, 10 percent in Santa Rosa, and under seven percent in Cloverdale.

### **2.2.2 Projected Modal Split and Transit Demand**

The daily mode share for transit systems is projected to increase from about 2.0 percent in 1984 to 2.8 percent for work trips. Peak period and average weekday boardings on transit for regional/intercity trips are projected to increase more dramatically with a corresponding decrease in vehicle miles traveled. Improved transit and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Transit lanes on the U.S. 101 Freeway would reduce peak-period volumes by 1,200 at the Marin County line.

### **2.2.3 Projected Future Traffic Volumes and Conditions**

Figures CT-2c and CT-2d on pages 291 and 293 show projected traffic volumes and levels of service during a typical weekday and peak A.M. period. Several roadways in Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Sebastopol are projected to operate at level of service D or E during the peak period. Congestion is projected for a portion of Highway 12 north of Sonoma, Highway 121 in the Schellville area, Highway 116 south of Sebastopol, Highway 12 from Sebastopol to Llano Road, Fulton Road north of the Highway 12 interchange, and segments of Highway 101 south of Petaluma, between Cotati and Santa Rosa, and north of Santa Rosa.

### **2.2.4 Future Recreation Related Travel**

Many highways in Sonoma County will continue to have their highest traffic volumes on summer weekends due to recreational travel. Roads likely to have significant weekend travel delays include Highway 12, 121, and 116 in the Sonoma Valley, Lakeville Highway and Stage Gulch in the Petaluma Area, Highway 116 from Cotati to Jenner, Bodega Highway, Bohemian Highway, Highway 1 from Bodega Bay to Jenner and north of Fort Ross to the Sea Ranch, River Road, Westside Road, Dry Creek Road, Alexander Valley Road, and Dutcher Creek

Road. The highway plan would reduce weekend congestion on U.S. 101 from Windsor to the Marin County line and in Cloverdale, Highway 12 in the Sonoma Valley and Highway 1 near Bodega Bay.

### **2.2.5 Future Transport of Goods and Materials**

About one fourth of the vehicles registered in the County in 1986 were commercial vehicles. Truck traffic is significant on Highway 37, U.S. 101, and Route 128 where percentages of trucks range from seven to 15 percent. Truck traffic generating land uses are found mainly in the Cloverdale/N.E. County, Healdsburg, Southwest Santa Rosa and Petaluma areas. The areas of greatest increase in truck travel generally coincide with areas of future industrial development and include U.S. 101, which carries the majority of through or intercounty truck traffic.

## **3.0 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT**

**Goal CT-1:** Develop a comprehensive circulation and transit system that is safe, efficient, environmentally sound, accessible, and coordinated with the land use plan.

**Objective CT-1.1:** Design and implement a circulation and transit system that will serve projected future travel demand, minimize congestion, achieve the shortest feasible travel times and distances, and achieve the land use plan of city centered growth and limited growth in rural areas.

**Objective CT-1.2:** Design and implement a circulation and transit system that serves the elderly, physically handicapped, youth, and persons with limited incomes so that they may participate in a full range of activities.

**Objective CT-1.3:** Require that circulation and transit system improvements be done in a manner which, to the extent practical, minimizes disturbance of the natural environment and reduces air and noise pollution.

**Objective CT-1.4:** Encourage increased ridership on public transit systems and increased use of alternative modes, including bicycles and walking.

**Objective CT-1.5:** Coordinate regional and express route transit services with local transit services and parking facilities to facilitate transfers.

**Objective CT-1.6:** Equitably distribute the costs of circulation and transit system improvements necessary to maintain the levels of service set forth in Objective CT-2.1 on page 296.

**The County shall use the following policies, in addition to those of the Resource Conservation and Noise Elements, to achieve these objectives:**

**CT-1a:** Design and construct the circulation and transit system to provide, but not substantially exceed, the capacities needed to serve the travel demand of 468,540 residents and about 190,000 jobs.

**CT-1b:** Formulate a circulation and transit plan that encourages the concentration of residents and jobs in urban centers.

**CT-1c:** Work with local governments and other responsible agencies to evaluate and propose solutions to regional circulation and transit problems in the Northbay area.

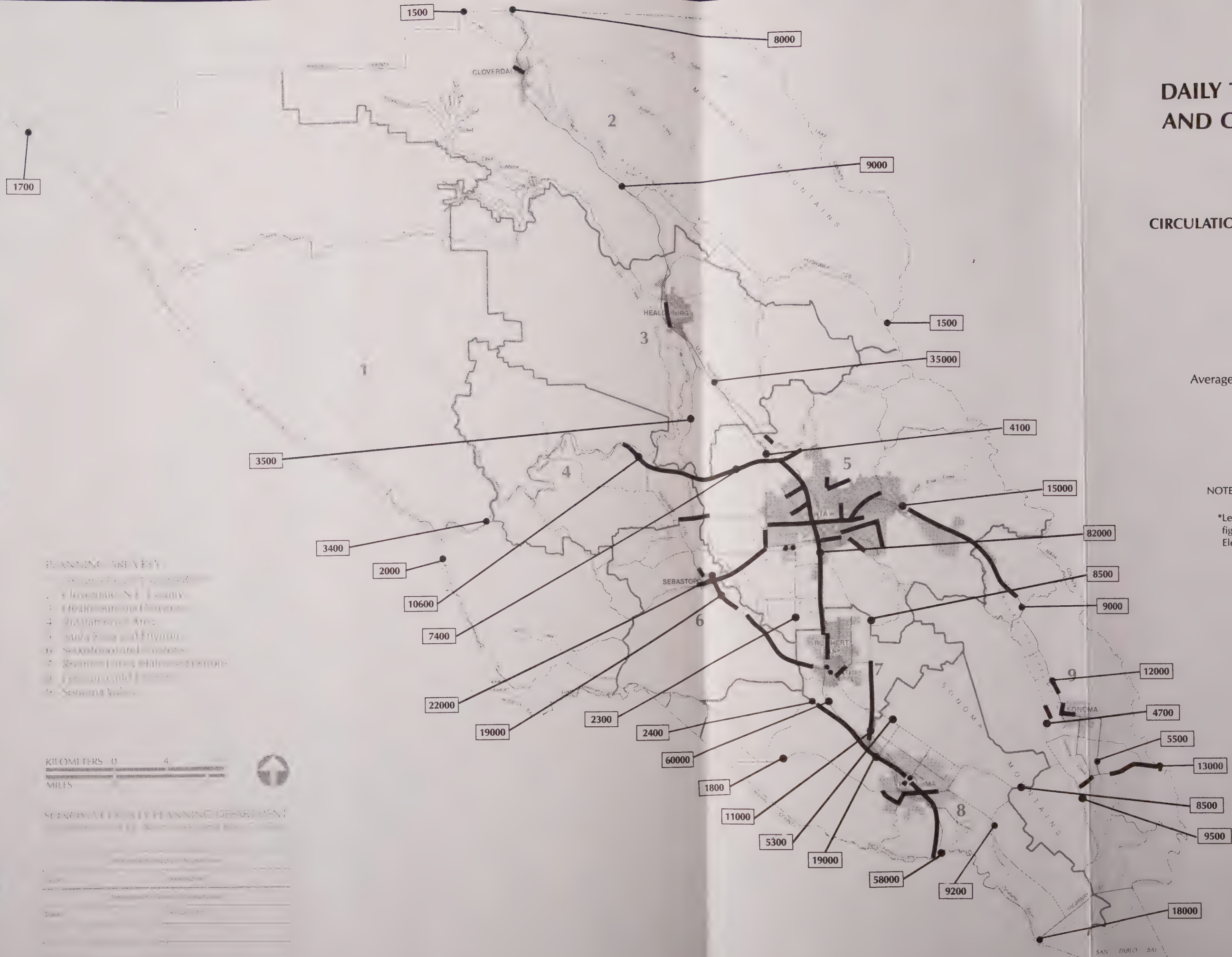
**CT-1d:** Review and comment on major development projects in adjacent counties that affect the Highway 101 commute. Consider recommending staggered work hours and other means of reducing commute congestion.

**CT-1e:** Work with the incorporated cities to mitigate the cumulative impacts of incorporated and unincorporated development on the countywide circulation and transit system. Use annexations, redevelopment agreements, revenue sharing agreements, tax allocation agreements and the CEQA process



# DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND CONGESTION 1984

## CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT



Average Traffic Volumes 1984

\*Level of Service D/E

Level of Service F

NOTE: Undesignated roadways have no congestion.

\*Level of Service, as defined on table CT-1 and figure CT-2 of the Circulation and Transit Element.

### PLANNING AREA KEY

- 1. Cloverdale NE County
- 2. Healdsburg County
- 3. Sebastopol Area
- 4. Santa Rosa and Eureka
- 5. Sonoma County
- 6. Sonoma County
- 7. Sonoma County
- 8. Sonoma County
- 9. Sonoma County

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SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT





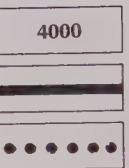
# A.M. PEAK TRAFFIC VOLUMES, AND CONGESTION 1984

## CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

Average Traffic Volumes 1984

\*Level of Service D/E

Level of Service F

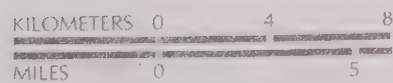


NOTE: Undesignated roadways have no congestion.

\*Level of Service, as defined on table CT-2 and figure CT-2 of the Circulation and Transit Element.

### PLANNING AREA KEY

1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
3. Healdsburg and Environs
4. Russian River Area
5. Santa Rosa and Environs
6. Sebastopol and Environs
7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
8. Petaluma and Environs
9. Sonoma Valley



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
375 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

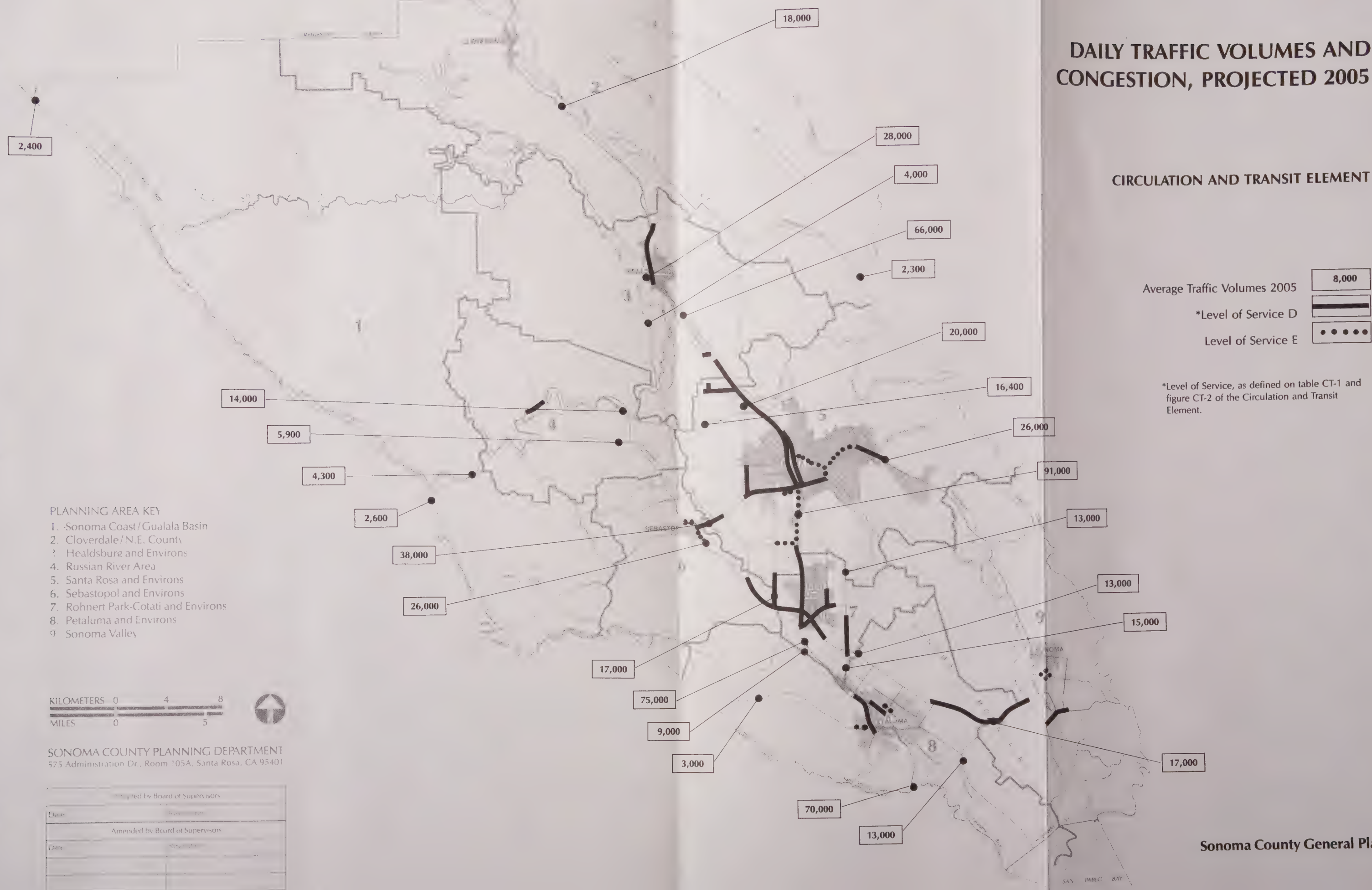
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Date:	Month/Day/Year





## DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND CONGESTION, PROJECTED 2005

### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT



### PLANNING AREA KEY

1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
3. Healdsburg and Environs
4. Russian River Area
5. Santa Rosa and Environs
6. Sebastopol and Environs
7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
8. Petaluma and Environs
9. Sonoma Valley

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575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

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# PEAK TRAFFIC VOLUMES, AND CONGESTION, PROJECTED 2005

## CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

Average Traffic Volumes 2005 8,000  
\*Level of Service D —  
Level of Service E •••••

\*Level of Service, as defined on table CT-2 and figure CT-2 of the Circulation and Transit Element.

### PLANNING AREA KEY

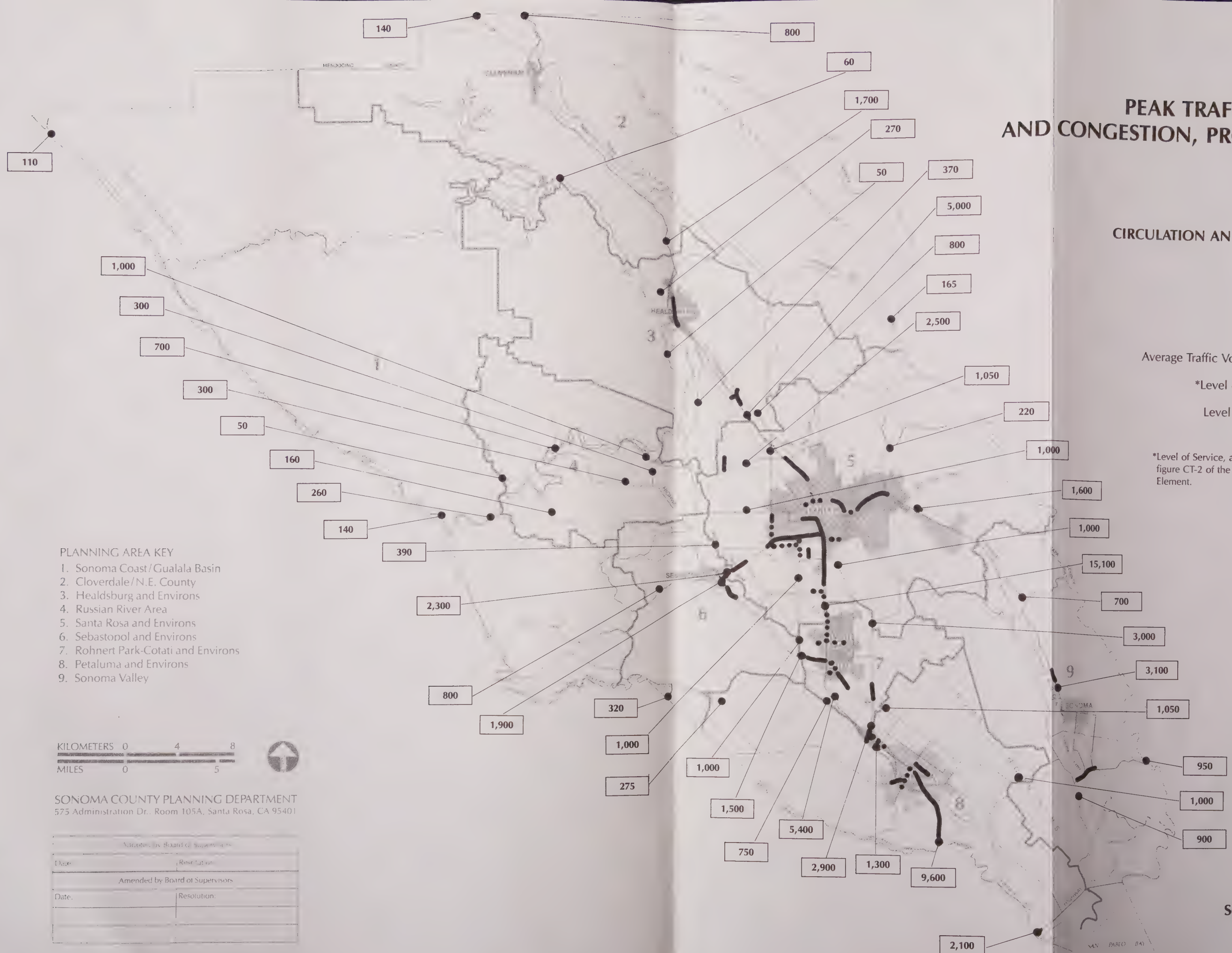
1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
3. Healdsburg and Environs
4. Russian River Area
5. Santa Rosa and Environs
6. Sebastopol and Environs
7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
8. Petaluma and Environs
9. Sonoma Valley

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MILES 0 5



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Adopted by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:
Amended by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:







as tools to ensure that development within the cities pays its fair share toward mitigating traffic impacts in the unincorporated portion of the County.

**CT-1f:** The County may use, individually or in combination, the following funding mechanisms to pay for circulation and/or transit improvement projects:

- 1) State and Federal transportation funding.
- 2) Local sales tax increases as allowed by state law.
- 3) Area traffic mitigation fees and/or countywide traffic mitigation fees.
- 4) Special Assessment Districts for improvement projects which benefit an identifiable local area.
- 5) Local gasoline tax.
- 6) Lease unused County owned lands adjacent to transportation facilities for such purposes as parking, mini-storage facilities, and recreation.
- 7) Increased County Bed Tax.
- 8) Dedication of land or other transportation improvements by developers.
- 9) Revenue sharing, redevelopment, and tax allocation agreements during the annexation approval process.
- 10) Other appropriate funding mechanisms.

**CT-1g:** Avoid construction of circulation and transit system components not identified on Figures CT-6a through CT-6i which encourage growth in rural areas.

**CT-1h:** Make a variety of circulation and transit options available to major employment and activity centers including direct access to express transit routes and primary arterial highways.

**CT-1i:** Encourage circulation and transit system improvements identified on Figures CT-6a through CT-6i which improve access to jobs within the county.

**CT-1j:** Encourage measures which will reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled during peak periods in order to reduce automobile emissions. These measures include:

- 1) incentives for carpooling and vanpooling
- 2) HOV and transit vehicle lanes along Highway 101 from Windsor to the Marin County line
- 3) incentives to increase transit ridership, including:
  - employee transportation allowances, convenient bus turnouts and shelters, and shuttle buses from job centers to express bus stops
- 4) flex-time and modified work schedules
- 5) facilities for bicycle use
- 6) encouraging pedestrian traffic

**CT-1k:** Where practical, locate and design improvements and new circulation and transit facilities to minimize disruption of neighborhoods and communities, disturbance of biotic resource areas, destruction of trees, and noise impacts.

**CT-1l:** Locate and design circulation and transit system improvements and operations to encourage fuel and energy efficiency.

**CT-1m:** Use the capital improvements program to establish improvement priorities and scheduling for roadway construction projects and transit facility construction.

**CT-1n:** To the extent possible, accommodate future circulation and transit demand by using existing facilities more efficiently, or improving and expanding them before building new facilities.

**CT-1o:** Implement the provisions of Assembly Bill No. 3705 as per guidelines to be established by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).

#### 4.0 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR THE COUNTYWIDE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Three major issues affect the countywide highway system plan: 1) whether to increase the capacity of the 101 freeway or the parallel arterials, 2) how to define and measure Level of Service (LOS) and 3) how to finance and distribute the cost of improvements needed to serve projected growth.

Figure CT-3 on page 297 illustrates highway plan concepts, including the functional classification system. Figures CT-6a through CT-6i show the designated countywide highway system.

**Goal CT-2:** Provide and maintain a highway system capacity to serve projected highway travel demand in 2005 at acceptable levels of service.

**Objective CT-2.1:** Reduce congestion on the countywide highway system by maintaining a "C" level of service or better on designated arterial and collector roadways unless a lower level of service is shown on Figures CT-2c and CT-2d on pages 291 - 293, a lower level of service is determined to be acceptable due to environmental or community values existing in some portions of the County, or the project(s) which would cause the lower level of service has an overriding public benefit which outweighs the increased congestion that would result.

**Objective CT-2.2:** Correlate new development with roadway improvements necessary to maintain the countywide levels of service set forth in Objective CT-2.1 or better on arterial and collector roadways as is more fully explained in policy CT-2b.

**Objective CT-2.3:** Establish a functional classification system for major highways, set minimum right-of-way and design standards, and classify needed roadway improvements.

**Objective CT-2.4:** Establish guidelines for obtaining rights-of-way for planned and likely future highways.

#### 4.1 General Policies Related to the Countywide Highway System

The sections includes general policies for the County's roadway system and classification of roadway improvements.

**CT-2a:** Use the levels of service shown on Figures CT-2c and CT-2d on pages 291 - 293 to determine whether or not congestion is exceeding the desired level of service on the countywide highway system. Use area and/or project traffic analyses to determine whether intersection impacts or other localized congestion may also affect these desired levels of service.

**CT-2b:** Assure that new development occurs only when a funding mechanism is available for improvements needed to achieve these levels of service specified in CT-2a above. If the Board determines that a project will provide significant overriding public benefit, the project may be exempt from this requirement.

**CT-2c:** Tables CT-1 and CT-2 on pages 299 and 300 define levels of service "C" and "D" on a peak hour and average daily basis and should be used as a guideline for measurement of roadway congestion.

**CT-2d:** Divide the countywide highway system improvements shown on Figures CT-6a through CT-6i into two categories for funding purposes: 1) those which primarily serve countywide traffic demand and 2) those which primarily serve local area demand. Assign primary responsibility for funding of countywide improvements to the state or federal governments and/or all city and county residents and businesses. Assign funding responsibility for local area improvements to city and county residents and businesses in that defined area. This policy is not intended to express a priority of one category over the other.

**CT-2e:** Primary responsibility for funding intersection, right-of-way, and other needed localized improvements not identified as part of the countywide highway system belongs to individual projects.



Figure CT-3

# Highway Plan Concepts

## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Category	Function	Types of Standards
<b>Freeway</b>	Carry interurban, regional and interstate traffic	Number of travel lanes, controlled access, divided by median or barriers, grade-separated interchanges
<b>Primary Arterial</b> <b>Secondary Arterial</b>	Carry large traffic volumes over long distances; county-wide or regional importance; connect major traffic operators	Number of travel lanes, driveway spacing, signalization, parking restrictions, right-of-way width, roadway width
<b>Major Collector</b> <b>Minor Collector</b>	Carry local area traffic to the arterial system	Number of travel lanes, signalization, right-of-way width, roadway width
<b>Local road</b>	Provide access to property; carry local traffic	Number of travel lanes, right-of-way width

## IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

Map Category	Category Name	Types of Improvements
<b>A</b>	"Upgrade/maintenance"	Safety improvements, curvature reductions, traffic control devices, minor pavement widening, resurfacing, intersection improvements/turn lanes
<b>B</b>	"Management"	Widening for continuous turn lanes, bridge widening, intersection improvements
<b>C</b>	"Major project"	Additional through travel lanes to expand capacity

## LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS)

Level	Traffic Condition
<b>LOS "A"</b>	• Free flow conditions • Low volumes • High operating speed • Uninterrupted flow • No restriction on maneuverability • Drivers maintain desired speeds • Little or no delays
<b>LOS "B"</b>	• Stable flow condition • Operating speeds beginning to be restricted
<b>LOS "C"</b>	• Stable flow but speed and maneuverability restricted by higher traffic volumes • Satisfactory operating speed for urban conditions • Delays at signals
<b>LOS "D"</b>	• Approaching unstable flow • Low speeds • Major delays at signals • Little freedom to maneuver
<b>LOS "E"</b>	• Lower operating speeds • Volume at or near capacity • Unstable flow • Major delays and stoppages
<b>LOS "F"</b>	• Forced flow conditions • Low speeds • Volumes below capacity, may be zero • Stoppages for long periods because of downstream congestion

**CT-2f:** Develop a program to evaluate the planned circulation and transit system on an on-going basis to determine whether it is meeting the County's transportation needs. The purpose of this monitoring program will be to ensure proper correlation between the Circulation and Land Use Elements of this plan, to establish a basis for setting traffic mitigation fees, and to evaluate new projects. Should analysis reveal that the Circulation and Land Use Elements are not in balance, this plan should be amended to achieve equilibrium.

**CT-2g:** Classify improvement projects on existing roadways which maintain or improve traffic safety but do not increase capacity as "upgrade/maintenance" projects; category "A". For intersections, these improvements may include traffic control and safety devices, minor pavement widening for curvature reduction, and an initial left and/or right turn lane. For roadways, this class includes safety related pavement widening to safely accommodate bicycle and vehicular traffic, traffic safety devices (e.g. guard rails), and resurfacing.

**CT-2h:** Classify improvement projects on existing roadways which moderately increase capacity as "management" projects; category "B". For intersections, these improvements may include widening for additional (not initial) left or right turn lanes and stacking lanes. For roadway segments, they may include widening for a continuous two way left turn lane and bridge widening, without new through lanes.

**CT-2i:** Classify improvement projects on existing roadways involving additional travel lanes which substantially increase capacity as "major" projects; category "C".

**CT-2j:** Adopt ordinances or specific or area plans to establish plan lines for arterial and collector highways based upon distance from road center lines. Use the guidelines in Table CT-3 on page 301 for right-of-way acquisition. Where allowed by law, prohibit new structures within the plan line. Measure required setbacks from the plan line boundary.

**CT-2k:** The County may require correction of potential safety deficiencies (inadequate road width, lack of traffic control devices, intersection alignment) prior to, or as part of, project approval.

## **4.2 The Highway 101 and Highway 12 Freeways**

Two highways are designated as freeways by the plan: U.S. Highway 101 and State Highway 12 from Farmers Lane in East Santa Rosa to Llano Road east of Sebastopol.

**The County shall use the following policies applicable to freeways:**

**CT-2l:** Freeways are limited access highways designed to carry large volumes of interurban, regional, and interstate traffic, and carry local traffic in urban areas. Apply the following standards which are intended to be compatible with CAL TRANS requirements:

- 1) Separate opposite travel lanes by a median strip or other barrier.
- 2) Prohibit access from abutting parcels. Allow access prior to improvement to freeway standards if there is no alternative access route to a parcel.
- 3) Limit access to cross streets to grade separated interchanges.
- 4) Provide acceleration and deceleration lanes at interchanges.
- 5) Consider providing auxiliary lanes from one interchange to another in urban areas which have closely spaced interchanges or where travel demand warrants.

**CT-2m:** Designate U.S. Highway 101 as a freeway for its entire length in Sonoma County. Improve it to freeway standards as a high priority.

**CT-2n:** Develop the planned additional travel lanes on Highway 101 to allow for high occupancy vehicles (HOV) and transit use during peak commute periods.



TABLE CT-1

**APPROXIMATE DAILY VEHICLE CAPACITIES  
AT LEVELS OF SERVICE "C" AND "D"  
(Total for all lanes, both directions)**

Type Facility	Level of Service	
	C"	"D"
Rural Road - 2 L, good geometrics*	5,000	5,600
- 1 L,	1,200	1,400
Residential Street - 2 L	1,200	2,000
Collector - 2 L Major	7,000	8,000
- 4 L Major	15,000	17,000
- 2 L Minor	5,000	5,600
- 3 L w/2-way left turn lane	10,000	11,000
Secondary Arterials - 2 L	10,000	11,300
- 4 L	20,000	23,000
- 3 L w/2-way left turn lane	14,000	15,700
Major Arterials - 2 L	12,000	13,500
- 4 L	22,000	25,000
Divided Expressway - 4 L (no parking)	30,000	35,000
Freeway - 4 L	50,000	58,000
- 6 L	76,000	88,000

\* As per the current text of "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets" by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

TABLE CT-2

**APPROXIMATE PEAK HOUR (60 MINUTES) MAXIMUM VEHICLE  
CAPACITIES AT LEVELS OF SERVICE "C" AND "D"**

(Vehicles per Hour in Heavier Direction)

Type Facility	Level of Service	
	"C"	"D"
Rural Road - 2 L, good geometrics*	1,000	1,200
- 1 L,	100	120
Residential Street, 2 L	80	140
Collector, - 2 L Major	500	560
- 4 L Major	1,100	1,230
- 2 L Minor	400	450
Secondary Arterial - 2 L	700	780
- 4 L	1,500	1,680
Major Arterial - 2 L	900	1,010
- 4 L	2,000	2,240
Divided Expressway - 4 L	2,400	2,700
Freeway - 4 L	3,000	3,240
- 6 L	4,500	4,860

\* As per the current text of "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets" by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.



TABLE CT-3

## GUIDELINES FOR ROADWAY DESIGN

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION	RIGHT-OF-WAY	PAVEMENT WIDTH
FREEWAY	STATE	STATE
Parallel Arterial	Urban: 86' Rural: 110'	Lane: 12' Shoulder: 8'
Primary and Secondary Arterial	Urban: Vary Rural: 2 lane: 60' 3 lane: 72' 4 lane: 86'	Lane: 12' Shoulder: 8'
Collector	Urban: 2 lane: 60' 3 lane: 72' 4 lane: 86' Rural: May be reduced	Lane: 12' Shoulder: 8' May be reduced in rural areas.
Local	Urban: Vary Rural: 50'	Vary

Standards in this table are considered to be guidelines which may be modified where warranted by site specific conditions or where Federal and State standards supercede.

**CT-2o:** Consider new interchanges or overpasses at the following intersections with Highway 101: San Antonio Road, Kastania Road, Rainier Avenue, Old Redwood Highway, Railroad Avenue, Corona Road, Bellevue Avenue, Wilson Lane, and Arata Lane. Provide substantial improvements at the following interchanges: Washington Street, Wilfred Avenue, Hearn Avenue, Todd Road, Airport Boulevard, Fulton Road, and Windsor River Road.

**CT-2p:** Provide interchanges with the existing 101 route north and south of Cloverdale and with an appropriate intermediate cross street.

**CT-2q:** Designate State Highway 12 as a freeway from Llano Road to Farmers Lane.

**CT-2r:** Consider new interchanges at the intersections of Highway 12 with Fulton Road, Stony Point Road, Brookwood Avenue, and Farmers Lane.

**CT-2s:** Reconstruct the part of Highway 12 at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds to freeway standards.

#### **4.3 The Parallel Arterial system in the Petaluma-Windsor Urban Corridor**

If improved, the Stony Point/Fulton Road arterial on the west side of Highway 101 and the Adobe Road/Petaluma Hill Road/Old Redwood Highway arterial on the east side could provide an alternative route to Highway 101.

**The County shall use the following policies for the parallel arterial system:**

**CT-2t:** Develop the parallel arterials in the 101 corridor as alternative routes which could attract a significant share of commuters during peak travel periods.

**CT-2u:** To the extent allowed by law, reserve right-of-way necessary to accommodate four travel lanes to allow for future expansion after the year 2005.

**CT-2v:** Apply the following standards and those included in Table CT-3 on page 301 to parallel arterials:

- 1) The needed number of through travel lanes is shown on Figures CT-6c, 6e, 6g, and 6h .
- 2) Discourage access from abutting parcels and prohibit it if reasonable access is available elsewhere. Encourage driveway consolidations. Avoid parking during peak travel periods.
- 3) Provide turning lanes and deceleration/acceleration lanes at intersections. Signalization shall favor the parallel arterial.
- 4) Avoid future plan amendments to add new commercial uses, including travel related services, on parcels abutting a parallel arterial unless the use is within a designated urban service area.

#### **4.4 The Primary and Secondary Arterial System**

**The following policies shall apply to designated arterial highways:**

**CT-2w:** The Public Works Department shall set and enforce access standards for new driveways and other encroachments to arterial highways. These standards may include functional layout, location, and spacing requirements to minimize side frictions.

**CT-2x:** Primary arterials are highway routes which carry large volumes of intercity or local traffic within urban areas and which place priority on the flow of traffic rather than on access to property. The following standards and those included in Table CT-3 on page 301 apply to "primary arterials":

- 1) The needed number of travel lanes is indicated on Figures CT-6a through 6i.
- 2) Allow access from abutting parcels if it does not interfere with traffic function. Encourage consolidation of driveways. Discourage parking, especially during peak hours.
- 3) Provide continuous left turn lanes in urban areas, where practical. Provide turning lanes at intersections with other arterial and collector highways. Signals shall favor the arterial.



- 4) Consider requiring urban improvement standards within urban service areas.

**CT-2y:** Secondary arterials are highway routes that carry lower traffic volumes than primary arterials or cover shorter distances. Within urban areas, these highways may connect large scale traffic generators and carry more local traffic. The following design standards and those included in Table CT-3 apply to secondary arterials:

- 1) The needed number of travel lanes is indicated on Figures CT-6a through 6i.
- 2) Allow access from abutting parcels if it does not interfere with the traffic function of the highway. Encourage consolidation of driveways.
- 3) Provide continuous left turn lanes in urban areas. Where practical, provide turning lanes at intersections with other arterial and collector highways. Signals shall favor the arterial.
- 4) Within urban service areas, consider requiring urban improvement standards.

#### 4.5 Major and Minor Collectors

The following policies shall apply to collectors designated on Figures CT-6a through CT-6i:

**CT-2z:** Collector roadways are highway routes which are intended to carry the internal traffic of a local area from the local road system to arterial highways and provide access to property, especially in rural areas. The following standards and those included on Table CT-3 on page 301 apply to both major and minor collector roadways:

- 1) The needed number of travel lanes is indicated on Figures CT-6a through 6i.
- 2) Allow access from abutting parcels. Allow on-street parking.
- 3) Consider signalization in urban areas at some intersections, especially with arterial routes.
- 4) Consider reduced standards for collector roads in rural areas that have very low projected traffic volumes.
- 5) Within urban service areas, consider requiring additional urban improvement standards.

#### 4.6 Local Roads

The following policies apply to local roads:

**CT-2aa:** Local roads are those county-owned roads which are intended to provide access to property and to carry local traffic to collector highways. The following standards and those included on Table CT-3 on page 301 apply to local roads:

- 1) The needed number of travel lanes is usually two but may be one on some remote roadways and some rural bridges.
- 2) Design local roads for reasonable access by emergency and service vehicles.
- 3) When practical, locate horizontal and vertical road alignments to correspond to natural topography. Minimize grading.
- 4) Layout local roads and streets to avoid adverse concentration of stormwater runoff.
- 5) Within urban service areas, consider requiring urban improvement standards.
- 6) In agricultural areas, include measures such as road signs, wider shoulders, turnouts or over/underpasses to provide safer highways for the agricultural industry, residents, and visitors.

### 5.0 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR THE TRANSIT SYSTEM

The focus of the transit plan is on general policies and long-term transit routes and their relationship to the land use plan.

The plan policies foster coordination of transit services and development of a timed transfer system. Headways, schedules, and other operation management should make transfers convenient and improve average travel speed. Three different roles for public transportation are suggested: 1) provide basic mobility for transit-

dependent people, 2) provide an alternative means of travel for people, especially peak-period commuters, who prefer transit, and 3) provide back-up service to people when their car is not available.

A major issue is finding a technically and financially feasible transit system that is an acceptable transportation alternative to the public in the Highway 101 corridor. Routes considered to date include Highway 101, the NWPRR right-of-way, and the Bay. Concerns have been raised about the potential growth inducing effects of a rail or train mass transit system. Another important issue is the determination of the role that transit can be expected to play in reducing congestion.

Public transportation is most efficient where travel demand occurs in areas of higher density development. In areas with very low urban or rural density, which is typical of many locations in Sonoma County, it is difficult for transit to provide an acceptable level of service at a reasonable cost.

Figure CT-4 on page 306 shows the types of transit services and facilities in Sonoma County. Figure CT-5 on page 307 shows the principal countywide transit network. Section 7.0 of this element includes a map for each planning area detailing existing and proposed intercity and regional transit routes. Transit policies include: 1) acquisition of the NWPRR right-of-way for potential future use as a transit guideway, 2) possible construction of new HOV/transit lanes on Highway 101, 3) regional and intercounty bus routes, 4) intercity bus routes, and 5) local urban area transit and paratransit services.

**Goal CT-3:** Provide, in association with other regional and local transit agencies, transit services that are responsive to the future needs of commuters and transit-dependent people.

**Objective CT-3.1:** Increase the share of home based work or commute trips taken by public transit to about 5.0 percent by 2005, including about 2.5 percent by regional and intercity transit.

**Objective CT-3.2:** Encourage continued rail freight service on the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWPRR) right-of-way. If it is terminated, acquire it for potential use as an exclusive right-of-way for transit.

**Objective CT-3.3:** Coordinate express and local bus routes by establishing a series of "transit centers" or transfer sites and supportive park-and-ride lots in Sonoma Valley, Central Petaluma, the Cotati Hub, Rohnert Park, Central Santa Rosa, North Santa Rosa, Guerneville, and Windsor.

**Objective CT-3.4:** Provide fixed-route, scheduled bus services which will have convenient access to major population, economic, institutional and recreation centers.

**Objective CT-3.5:** Design transit systems to make convenient transfers among the various routes, especially during peak commute periods.

**Objective CT-3.6:** Provide and expand transit services in a timely, efficient and cost effective manner which is responsive to growth patterns and transit demand.

## 5.1 General Policies Related to Transit Services

The following policies apply in general to all types of transit services:

**CT-3a:** Provide convenient and accessible transit facilities for elderly and physically handicapped people.

**CT-3b:** Establish transfer facilities and supportive park-and-ride lots in Sonoma Valley, Central Petaluma, the Cotati Hub, Rohnert Park, Central Santa Rosa, North Santa Rosa, Guerneville, and Windsor. Locate transit centers to: 1) avoid rerouting by buses, 2) provide adequate off street parking, 3) provide convenient pedestrian access from activity centers, and 4) avoid arterials with heavy traffic and congestion. Transit centers should be designed to enhance public convenience.



**CT-3c:** Design the physical layout and geometrics of arterial and collector highways to be compatible with bus operations.

**CT-3d:** Require major traffic generating projects to provide fixed transit facilities, such as bus turnouts and passengers shelters and seating needed to serve anticipated or potential transit demand from the project.

**CT-3e:** Encourage and participate in joint efforts by the various transit operators to coordinate services by reducing route duplication, coordinating schedules to increase transfer potential, encouraging joint transit fare prepayment, joint marketing of transit services, and discounting fares for intersystem transfers.

**CT-3f:** In order to qualify for federal funding, request SCT and the Transportation Planning Council to prepare annual transit plans which comply with State and Federal laws. Use, to the extent practical, all available sources of transit revenues.

**CT-3g:** Design local transit routes and services within the Petaluma - Windsor corridor to provide feeder transit service to connect with intercounty and intercity routes at major transfer points.

## 5.2 Acquisition of the NWPRR Right-of-Way for Future Transit Guideway

The Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWPRR) right-of-way parallels U.S. Route 101 through Sonoma County. Although NWP provides rail freight service in Sonoma County and northward, it has been abandoned through most of Marin County. A transportation study involving Highway 101 corridor communities and agencies evaluated the acquisition of the NWPRR right-of-way for a transit system corridor.

The 101 Corridor Study (Phase I) and the General Plan Transportation Study both indicated that the conditions necessary to make a line-haul transit system feasible within Sonoma County are not likely to exist by 2005. Reasons include 1) the total volume of long distance commute trips within Sonoma County is not projected to be sufficiently high by 2005 to make the system cost effective or efficient, 2) a transbay mass transit connection, via a tunnel or second deck on the Golden Gate Bridge, is not practical, 3) capital costs and initial investment are extraordinarily high in comparison with other alternatives, 4) job sites within the 101 corridor are increasingly dispersed, 5) some residential growth continues to be low density and dispersed. These studies indicate, however, that the option of future use of the NWPRR corridor should be retained.

**The following policies of the County are applicable to the NWPRR right-of-way:**

**CT-3h:** Oppose abandonment of freight service, but if service from Sonoma County northward is abandoned and the right-of-way is to be disposed of, acquire it for future use as alternative transportation.

**CT-3i:** Resolve the future use of the NWPRR right-of-way for public transportation purposes in cooperation with corridor communities so that an integrated and mutually supportive set of transportation projects may be defined for Sonoma and Marin Counties.

## 5.3 Construction of HOV/Transit Lanes on Highway 101

HOV lanes are created by designating one peak flow travel lane to be used only by vehicles with more than one person and by transit. These restrictions ordinarily apply during peak flow periods of several hours during the morning and afternoon commute. The lane is available for mixed flow traffic during other hours.

HOV lanes reduce the number of vehicles traveling during peak commute periods by increasing the use of carpools, vanpools, and public transit, providing an incentive by allowing very rapid travel for these vehicles.

In addition to the policy CT-2n on page 298, the following apply to HOV/transit lanes on U.S. Highway 101:

Figure CT-4

# Transit Plan Concepts

## TYPES OF TRANSIT SERVICES AND TRANSIT OPERATORS

Service Type	Characteristics	Transit Operators
Inter-county Commute Service	Weekday line-haul service centered to peak period; express routing; may be on shared or separate right-of-way. May serve Trans-bay (S.F.) and Marin employment centers.	Golden Gate Transit
Basic Regional Service	Daily service, including weekends; serves variety of destinations; all-day service; fixed routes and schedules.	Golden Gate Transit Mendocino Transit Authority
Intra-county Service	Basic transit and commute transit between cities and/or communities within Sonoma County; express service during commute; fixed routes and schedules.	Sonoma County Transit
Local Area Service	Routes confined to a single urban area; fixed routes and schedules.	Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Cloverdale, Healdsburg and Sebastopol Municipal Transit Systems; Sonoma County Transit
Paratransit Service	Door-to-door service; unscheduled; subscription transit services.	Private companies and agencies

## FIXED CAPITAL FACILITIES/OPERATING ELEMENTS

### Fixed Facilities

- Exclusive rights-of-way/guideways for transit vehicles
- Transfer or "Transit Centers"
- Bus Turnouts
- Passenger Shelters
- Park-and-Ride Lots
- Maintenance and Administrative Facilities

### Operating Elements

- Routes and Route Networks
- Frequency of Service/Headways
- Schedules
- Fares



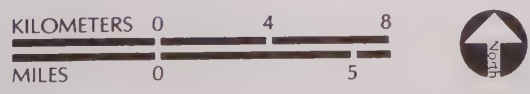
# COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT NETWORK PLAN: 2005

## CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

	Existing 1986	Proposed New
Exclusive Transit R.O.W. (N.W.P. Right-of-Way Reservation)		
Transit Vehicle/HOV Lane (Reserved during Peak Commute Period)		
Express Bus Routes Principal Intercity Bus Routes		
Transit Systems:		
Sonoma County Transit	SC	
Golden Gate Transit	GG	
Major Transfer Points Park and Ride Lots		

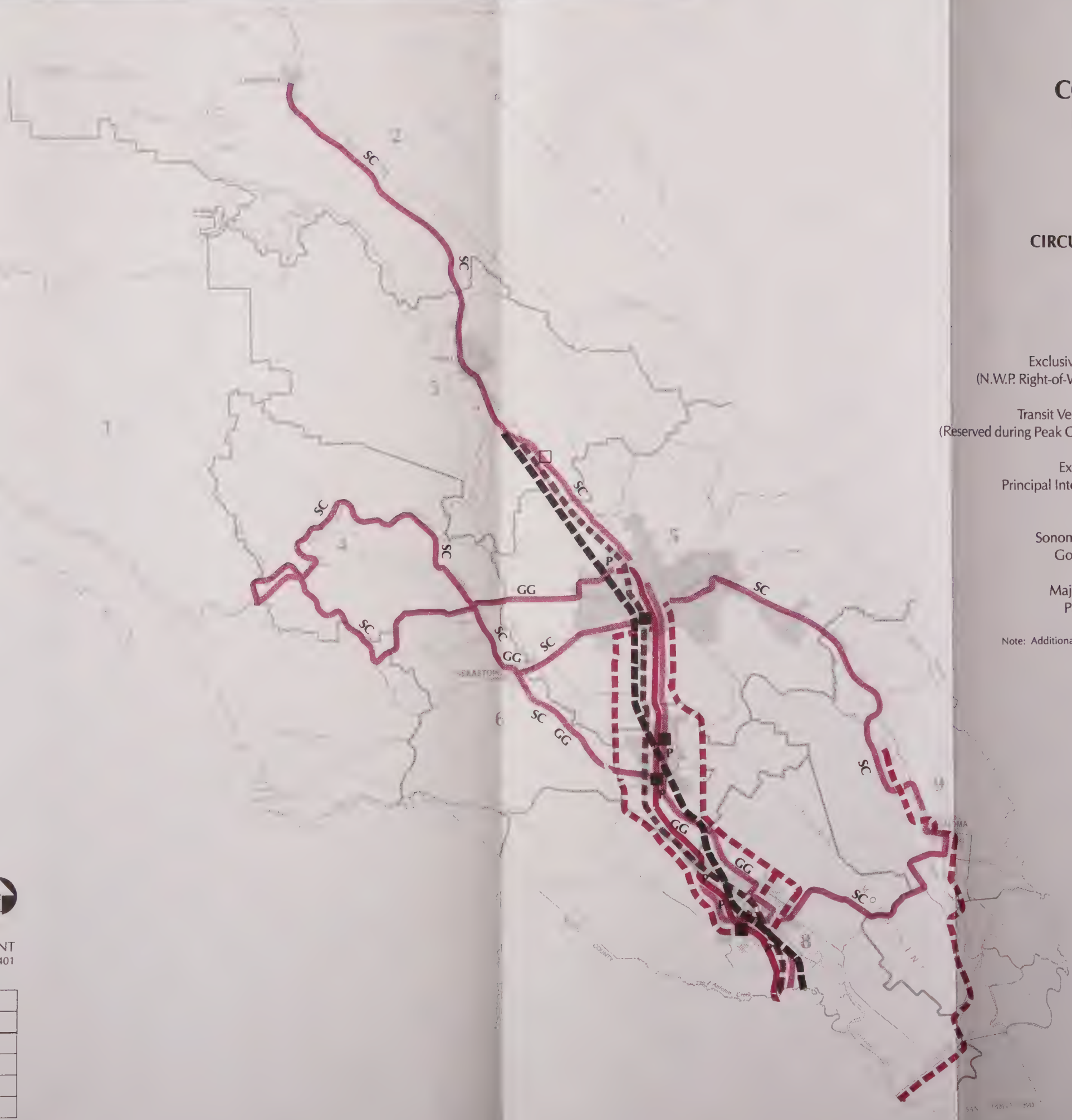
Note: Additional local transit routes are provided service by Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa Transit, Petaluma Transit.

- PLANNING AREA KEY
- 1. Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin
  - 2. Cloverdale/N.E. County
  - 3. Healdsburg and Environs
  - 4. Russian River Area
  - 5. Santa Rosa and Environs
  - 6. Sebastopol and Environs
  - 7. Rohnert Park-Cotati and Environs
  - 8. Petaluma and Environs
  - 9. Sonoma Valley



SONOMA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
575 Administration Dr., Room 105A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Adopted by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:
Amended by Board of Supervisors	
Date:	Resolution:







**CT-3j:** HOV lanes may be designated on Highway 101. They should be continuous, linking major population centers with employment centers. If HOV lanes are used, make them available for mixed flow traffic during non peak periods.

**CT-3k:** Base any use of HOV lanes on the volume of traffic flow and level of service during peak commute periods. Initial HOV designation may be as a demonstration project.

**CT-3l:** Accompany HOV lanes with measures to encourage carpooling and transit use and increase frequency of express bus service.

#### **5.4 Regional and Intercounty Express Bus Services**

Basic regional transit service is defined as general purpose bus service which ordinarily operates throughout the day and week, provides connections between Sonoma and other counties, and serves many destinations. In addition, express buses serve major employment centers outside of the county and provide frequent service during peak commute periods. The number of stops is usually kept to a minimum to reduce travel time. "Park-and-Ride" facilities for riders are provided at major stops or transit centers. Annual patronage by 2005 could rise from 600,000 to 1,100,000 passengers.

**The following policies apply to regional and intercounty express bus service:**

**CT-3m:** Support regional and commute bus service from Sonoma county to employment centers in San Francisco and Marin County.

**CT-3n:** Encourage additional commute service routes within Sonoma County if efficient and cost effective.

**CT-3o:** Encourage greater frequency of service and express commute service along the various intercounty routes where warranted. Encourage "club bus" group transit where practical and cost-effective.

**CT-3p:** In order to reduce peak period congestion on Highway 101, provide Sonoma-Marin commute bus service to employment centers in Marin County. Additional park-and-ride lots at major transit stops will be essential to attain sufficient patronage.

#### **5.5 Intercity Transit Service Within Sonoma County**

Intercity bus routes include basic and commute transit services. Sonoma County Transit provides fixed-route, scheduled bus service linking the eight cities and major unincorporated communities.

**The following policies apply to intercity transit services within Sonoma County:**

**CT-3q:** Designate Sonoma County Transit (SCT) as the primary agency responsible for intercity transit services. Coordinate routes, schedules, fares, etc. with other operators to make transfers convenient between the various transit systems, especially during commute periods.

**CT-3r:** Provide a system of bus routes that is responsive to intercity commuters, transit dependent groups and persons with low mobility. Select route alignments to provide convenient access to major job centers, retail and recreational areas, high and medium density residential areas, and major health care and educational facilities.

**CT-3s:** Add new intercity bus routes to the transit network which are responsive to growth patterns and which are cost effective.

**CT-3t:** Add other services as needed, including greater frequency of service along individual bus routes, reduced headways, increased hours of operations, expanded express or commuter service along principle commute corridors during peak periods, and new route extensions to provide bus service to group areas.

## 5.6 Local Urban Area Transit Services and Paratransit

Local transit services are defined as fixed-route bus or jitney service within an individual city and its immediate areas. Para-transit services are adjusted to the needs of a limited number of users and are not regular, fixed-route or fixed-schedule services. Para-transit includes "dial-a-ride", vanpools, and subscription bus service.

**The following policies are applicable to local transit and paratransit services:**

**CT-3u:** Encourage local transit services within incorporated areas. SCT may contract with cities to operate local area bus service.

**CT-3v:** Design and operate SCT services to complement local transit services. Design SCT's route network and schedules to serve intercity travelers, while city systems meet internal needs. Facilitate transfers to and from different systems.

**CT-3w:** Have SCT provide local area transit services in unincorporated urban areas including the Windsor and Russian River Areas.

**CT-3x:** Encourage paratransit services in both unincorporated and city areas. Promote efficiency and cost effectiveness in paratransit service such as use of joint maintenance and other facilities.

## 6.0 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT (TSM)

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) refers to measures designed to reduce the number of vehicle trips, shorten trip lengths, and change the timing of trips so that fewer people travel during peak commute periods. TSM encourages wider use of transit, vanpools, carpools, and other alternatives to the single occupant automobile. Large investments in new highway and transit systems are limited by lack of money, adverse community reactions, and other factors. TSM measures usually have lower capital costs and provide alternatives designed to modify travel demand patterns. They may be implemented within a short time-frame and evaluated quickly. Mandatory TSM measures may reduce peak period traffic by 5 to 10 percent.

Several policy issues arise in determining the extent to which TSM may be used to reduce congestion, including the effectiveness of voluntary compared to mandatory TSM measures, and the need to apply them only to new development projects or to all employers of a specific size. Public acceptance of TSM measures is uncertain. Some measures may inconvenience some people in order to reduce overall traffic congestion and improve system efficiency.

**Goal CT-4:** Use existing circulation and transit facilities more efficiently, especially highways, to: 1) reduce the amount of investment required in new or expanded facilities, 2) reduce automobile emissions and 3) increase the energy efficiency of the transportation system.

**Objective CT-4.1:** Use TSM to achieve a five percent reduction in the projected number of single occupant vehicles traveling during peak commute periods by 2005.

**Objective CT-4.2:** Share responsibility for implementation of TSM actions with cities and the private sector, including developers of new projects and existing employers.

**The County shall use the following policies to carry out the above objectives:**



**CT-4a:** County government should set an example for the community by developing a TSM program for the County Center and other offices.

**CT-4b:** Encourage TSM and traffic mitigation measures which divert automobile commute trips to transit whenever it is reasonably convenient. Encourage the following private sector and local agency programs:

- 1) Programs for new projects may include: site design to allow for transit access, bus turnouts and passenger shelters, sidewalks between transit stops and buildings, secure bicycle parking, complementary street layouts and geometrics which accommodate buses and bicycles, exclusive bus lanes, land dedication for transit, and "transportation stores" for tenants of business and industrial parks.
- 2) Employer programs to encourage transit use to existing job centers may include: transit information centers, on-site sale of transit tickets and passes, shuttles to transit stations or stops, transit ticket subsidies for employees, private or subscription transit service, parking fees and transportation allowances.
- 3) Local government programs may include: street and highway design and geometrics to accommodate transit vehicles and bicycles, bus turnouts and passenger shelters, sidewalk access to transit stops, park-and-ride lots, HOV lanes on major highways, signal pre-emption for buses, and "transit centers" at major focal points in the bus route network.

**CT-4c:** Encourage TSM and traffic mitigation measures which increase the average occupancy of vehicles as follows:

- 1) Employer and developer programs may include vanpools or carpools, ridesharing programs for employees, preferential parking, parking subsidies for rideshare vehicles, and transportation coordinator positions.
- 2) Local government or agency programs may include preferential parking space and fees for rideshare vehicles, flexibility in parking requirements, HOV lanes on major highway facilities, and residential parking permit restrictions around major traffic generators.

**CT-4d:** Encourage measures to modify the timing of peak commute trips to reduce congestion, including flexible, variable or staggered work hours.

**CT-4e:** If voluntary TSM measures do not effectively reduce peak period congestion, impose mandatory TSM measures by ordinance. These regulations, which may apply to existing employers as well as to new development, may require transportation management programs that reduce peak-period commute trips by a specified amount. Require that the program have a transportation coordinator, provide information, select and carry out TSM measures and monitor and report on program effects.

## **7.0 CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT POLICIES FOR THE PLANNING AREAS**

### **7.1 SONOMA COAST/GUALALA BASIN**

The Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin region does not have an extensive highway network due to its remote location and very low population density. The major highways are State Route 1, Highway 116, Bodega Highway, and the Bohemian Highway. All highways in the region are two lane or one lane rural roadways. Daily buses connects the small communities along Highway 1 to Sebastopol and Santa Rosa.

Traffic patterns are affected primarily by recreational travel. Traffic volumes are highest on Friday evenings in summer and from 3-7 p.m. on Sundays. Weekend travel delays occur on Highway 1 from near Bodega to Jenner and Bodega Highway west of Sebastopol. Projected weekday traffic volumes are relatively low. With proposed improvements, roadways are projected to function at Level of Service (LOS) "C" or better on weekdays in 2005.

**The following policies and improvements apply to the Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin planning area:**

**CT-5a:** Use figure CT-6a on page 313 as the improvement plan for this area's freeways, arterials, and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-5b:** Develop a bypass route for Highway 1 at Bodega Bay as shown in the Local Coastal Plan. No other new facilities are proposed in the arterial and collector systems.

**CT-5c:** Design improvements on Highway 1 to improve traffic flow during peak periods of recreation travel including turn lanes for Sonoma Coast State Beaches, parking areas and shoulder improvements.

**CT-5d:** Continue to provide transit services as shown in Figure CT-6a.

## 7.2 CLOVERDALE/N.E. COUNTY

The major highways in the Cloverdale/N.E. County region include the U.S. 101 Freeway, State Route 128, Dry Creek Road; Dutcher Creek Road; Alexander Valley Road. With the exception of the 101 Freeway, all highways in the region are one or two lane rural roadways. Transit service includes intercity service along the U.S. 101 Corridor. Cloverdale operates a local jitney service.

Recreational activities affect travel patterns in this region. U.S. 101 near Cloverdale has periods of significant weekend travel delay, especially during summer months. Periods of weekend congestion occur on Alexander Valley, Canyon, and Dutcher Creek Roads. Lake Sonoma is expected to become a major visitor destination and will affect Dry Creek and Dutcher Creek Roads as well as U.S. 101. By 2005, daily summer weekend traffic congestion is expected in the Dry Creek area, on U.S. 101 and on Route 128 in Alexander Valley. With proposed improvements, all area roadways are projected to function at level of service (LOS) "C" or better in 2005 on weekdays.

**In addition to the freeway improvements outlined in Section 4.2, the following policies and improvements apply to the Cloverdale/Northeast County planning area:**

**CT-6a:** Use Figure CT-6b on page 315 as the improvement plan for this area's arterials and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-6b:** Additional transit service may be provided by increasing the frequency of buses on the existing route or by express commute service when justified by ridership levels and transit demand.

**CT-6c:** Utilize Kelly Road to bypass the steep and winding segments of Hot Springs Road.

## 7.3 HEALDSBURG AND ENVIRONS

This region has a relatively extensive road network in the vicinity of Healdsburg and Windsor. The major traffic artery is U.S. 101. Other major highways include Dry Creek and Alexander Valley Roads, Eastside and Westside Roads, Chalk Hill Road, Windsor River Road, Shiloh Road, and Old Redwood Highway. All highways have two lanes except Highway 101. Some road in the Windsor area meet urban standards. Transit service operates principally on Old Redwood Highway and Healdsburg has a municipal bus service.

Large increases in traffic are expected on local roads in the Windsor area due to significant projected growth. Several area roadways will be affected by weekend recreational travel, including U.S. 101. Gravel trucks associated with mining along the Russian River will continue to impact several roadways. West Street in Healdsburg, Highway 101 south of Windsor River Road, and road segments in Central Windsor are expected to be moderately congested and operate below Level of Service "C". In all other areas, roads are projected to operate at level "C" or better in 2005.

**In addition to the freeway and arterial improvements outlined in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, the following policies and improvements apply to the Healdsburg and Environs area:**

**CT-7a** Use figure CT-6c on page 317 as the improvement plan for the area's freeways, arterials, and collectors. All other roadways are classified as local roads.



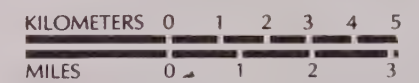
# HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

## Sonoma Coast / Gualala Basin Planning Area



### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

#### Sonoma County General Plan



#### HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

#### ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

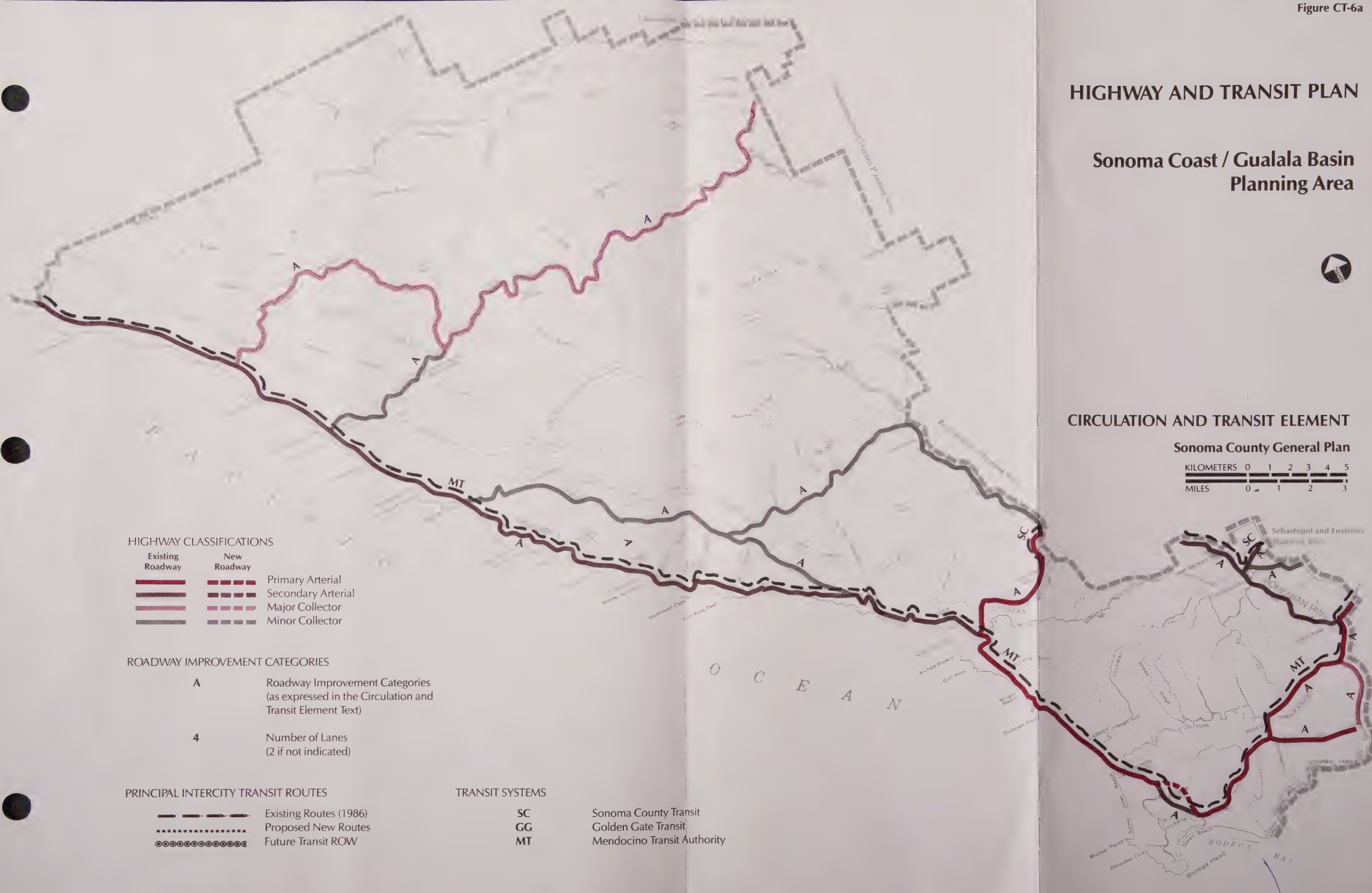
<b>A</b>	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
<b>4</b>	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

#### PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

#### TRANSIT SYSTEMS

<b>SC</b>	Sonoma County Transit
<b>GG</b>	Golden Gate Transit
<b>MT</b>	Mendocino Transit Authority







# HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

## Cloverdale / N.E. County Planning Area



### HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Freeway
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

### ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

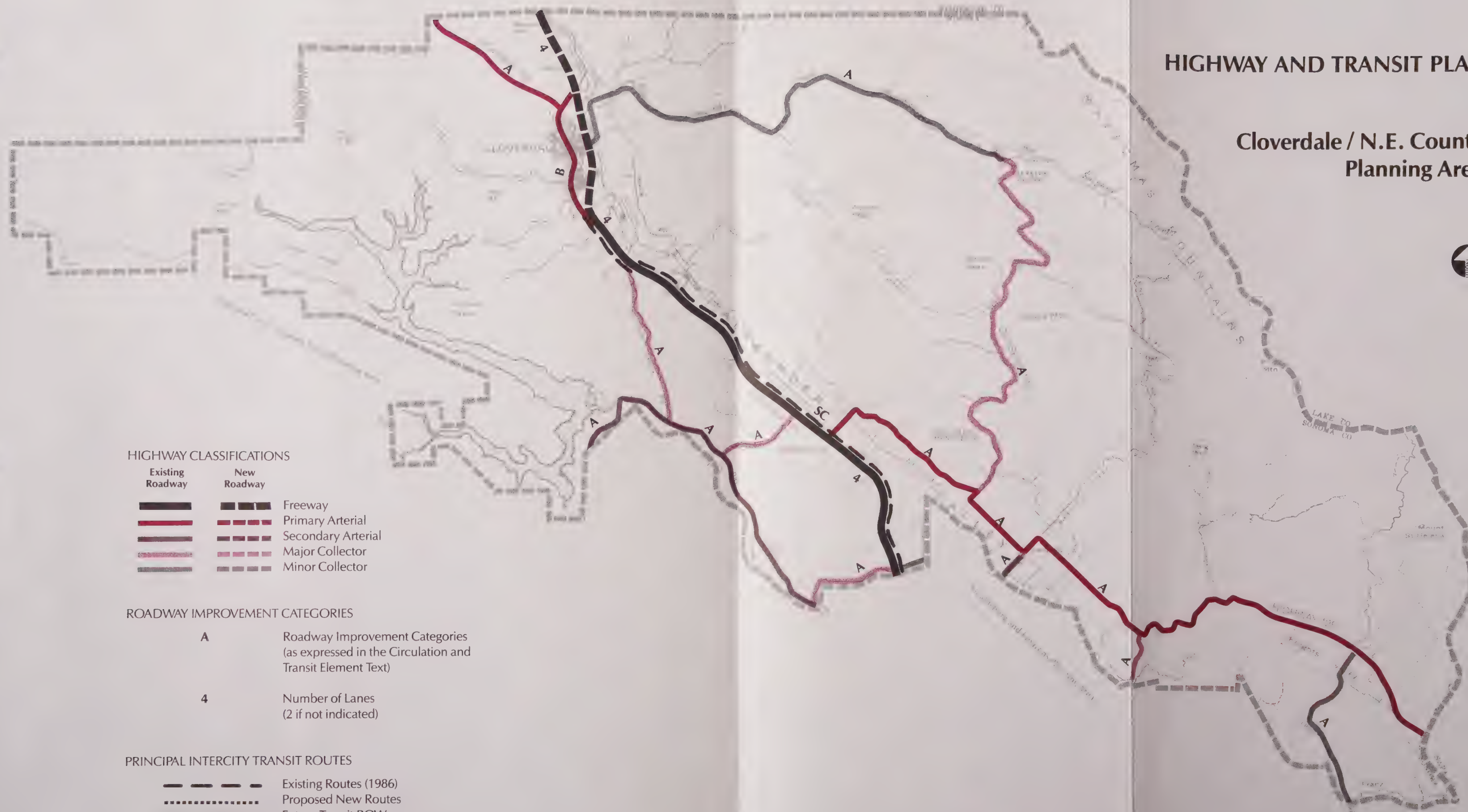
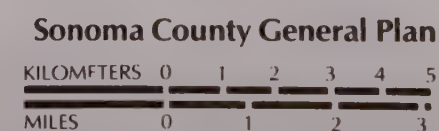
### PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

### TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT







# HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

## Healdsburg and Environs Planning Area



### HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Freeway
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

### ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

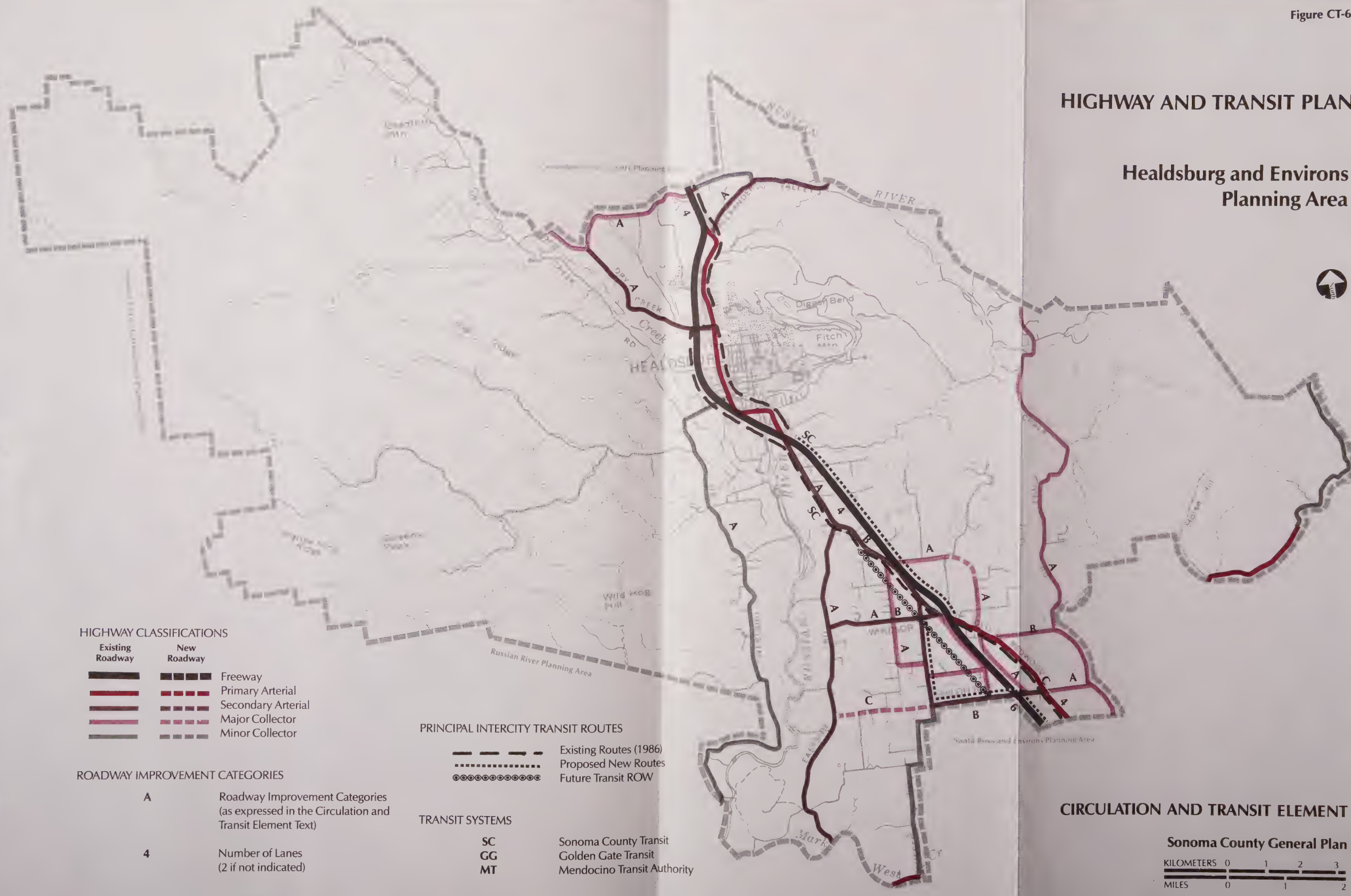
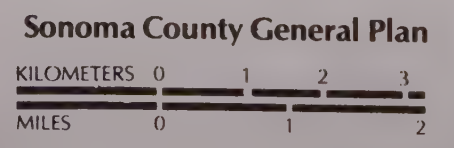
### PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

### TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT







**CT-7b:** Study and choose an alternative route for gravel trucks. Encourage trucks transporting gravel from Eastside Road to use this route rather than Windsor River Road through downtown Windsor.

**CT-7c:** The Windsor Specific Plan includes a detailed traffic analysis and provides a detailed plan for needed new local roadways and local improvements and establishes development fees by ordinance to finance a portion of the cost of these facilities. Consider requiring additional traffic mitigation or other funding for the countywide transportation system, if warranted.

**CT-7d:** Propose new direct transit routes to link residential areas in Windsor, Larkfield, and northwest Santa Rosa with job centers. Consider upgrading existing routes with more frequent or express service when justified by patronage and cost factors.

**CT-7e:** Consider the Windsor community a priority area for providing local area transit service, with timing determined by growth, transit demand, and cost factors. This is a potential location for a transit center/transfer site.

#### **7.4 RUSSIAN RIVER AREA**

The Russian River Area has a relatively extensive road network in the Russian River resort corridor. Many local roads are very narrow and do not meet modern standards. Major traffic arteries are River Road, State Highway 116, Bohemian Highway, and Mirabel Road. All highways are two lane rural roadways. Intercity transit service connects the river communities with Santa Rosa via Sebastopol.

Traffic patterns in the Russian River Area are significantly affected by recreational travel, especially on summer weekends. Extensive weekend travel delays occur along River Road between Guerneville and Hacienda. Lesser delays occur along River Road to U.S. 101, on Highway 116, Bohemian Highway, and Westside Road. Summer weekend traffic will continue to be congested on these routes.

All area roadways are projected to function in 2005 at LOS "C" or better on an average weekday basis.

**The following policies and improvements apply to the Russian River Area:**

**CT-8a:** Use figure CT-6d on page 321 as the improvement plan for this area's arterials and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-8b:** Consider a "bypass" for central Forestville.

**CT-8c:** Provide a new intercity transit route linking the Guerneville area with Santa Rosa via River Road and local area service between Monte Rio and Rio Nido.

#### **7.5 SANTA ROSA AND ENVIRONS**

The Santa Rosa area has the county's most extensive roadway network. The Highway 101 freeway is the major corridor. State Route 12 has several segments that are constructed to freeway standards. Important parallel arterials include Fulton and Stony Point Roads on the west and Old Redwood Highway/Petaluma Hill Road on the east. Other major arteries include Highway 12, River Road, Guerneville Road, Todd Road, Mark West Springs Road, Calistoga Road, and Bennett Valley Road.

Santa Rosa has an extensive local transit service. Regional and intercounty commute bus service is available to Marin County and San Francisco. Sonoma County Transit connects Santa Rosa to all cities and most unincorporated communities. Transfers between routes and systems is provided in Santa Rosa at the Second Street "Transit Mall".

Travel patterns reflect the dominant role of Santa Rosa in the County's economy which translates to substantial commuter traffic on area roadways. Projected 2005 traffic volumes will substantially increase over present levels. With improvements, peak traffic is projected to be congested (LOS "D" or "E") on several streets in Santa Rosa, in both directions on the U.S. 101 Freeway, on Highway 12 between Sebastopol and Llano Road, on a segment of Fulton Road above Highway 12, on Sebastopol Road between Wright Road and Stony Point Road, on a segment of Stony Point Road south of Highway 12, and on South Dutton north of Hearn Avenue. Localized congestion is projected at various freeway interchanges and their ramps and cross streets.

Coordination of circulation and transit system planning between Santa Rosa and the County is particularly important during the upcoming update of the city's general plan.

**In addition to the freeway and arterial improvements outlined in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, the following policies and improvements apply to the Santa Rosa and Environs region:**

**CT-9a:** Provide these major new highway facilities: extension of the Fountaingrove Parkway, extension of Farmer's Lane, extension of Todd Road concurrent with road improvements necessary to upgrade Todd Road, and extension of Laughlin Road/Sky Lane to Shiloh Road.

**CT-9b:** Use figures CT-6e(1) and CT-6e(2) on pages 323 and 325 as the improvement plans for this areas freeways, arterials, and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-9c:** Develop a new regional intercounty express commute bus service in the 101 Corridor. Increase the frequency of service on existing routes as growth and demand occur.

**CT-9d:** The Larkfield/Wikiup Plan includes a detailed traffic analysis and a detailed plan for local roadways and improvements and establishes development fees by ordinance to finance these facilities. Consider requiring additional traffic mitigation or other funding for the countywide transportation system, if warranted.

**CT-9e:** Add intercity bus service as follows: 1) an express commute route to the Sonoma Valley; 2) a direct route via River Road to the Russian River Area; 3) commute service along Stony Point Road and along Petaluma Hill Road to Petaluma; 4) commute service linking the Windsor/Airport Boulevard area, Northwest Santa Rosa, Santa Rosa Air Center and West Rohnert Park. Increase service frequency along existing routes as growth and increased transit demand occur.

**CT-9f:** Prepare detailed circulation and transit plans for unincorporated urban areas adjacent to Santa Rosa as part of future revisions of specific or area plans.

## **7.6 SEBASTOPOL AND ENVIRONS**

With its large rural residential population, this region is extensively traversed by rural roadways. State Route 116, is the major traffic artery. Other important roadways include Bodega Highway, Graton Road, Occidental Road, Roblar Road, Petaluma-Valley Ford Road, and small segments of Highway 12, Llano Road, and Stony Point Road. Commute bus service is available to San Francisco and Marin County along Highway 116. Intracounty service links the area to Santa Rosa, Petaluma and the Russian River area.

Area roadways are significantly affected by weekend recreational travel and by commute travel. Gravenstein Highway south of Sebastopol and Bodega Highway have substantial weekend travel delays. Lesser delays occur on Gravenstein Highway North. The dispersed development pattern will contribute to high traffic volumes and capacity deficiencies on some major arteries by 2005. Highway 12, and Highway 116 are projected to experience moderate congestion. All other roadways in unincorporated areas are expected to operate at level of service "C" or better with improvements. Some area roadways are projected to experience higher traffic volumes on weekends due to recreational travel.

**The following policies and improvements apply to the Sebastopol and Environs region:**



# HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

## Russian River Planning Area

### HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

### ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

### PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

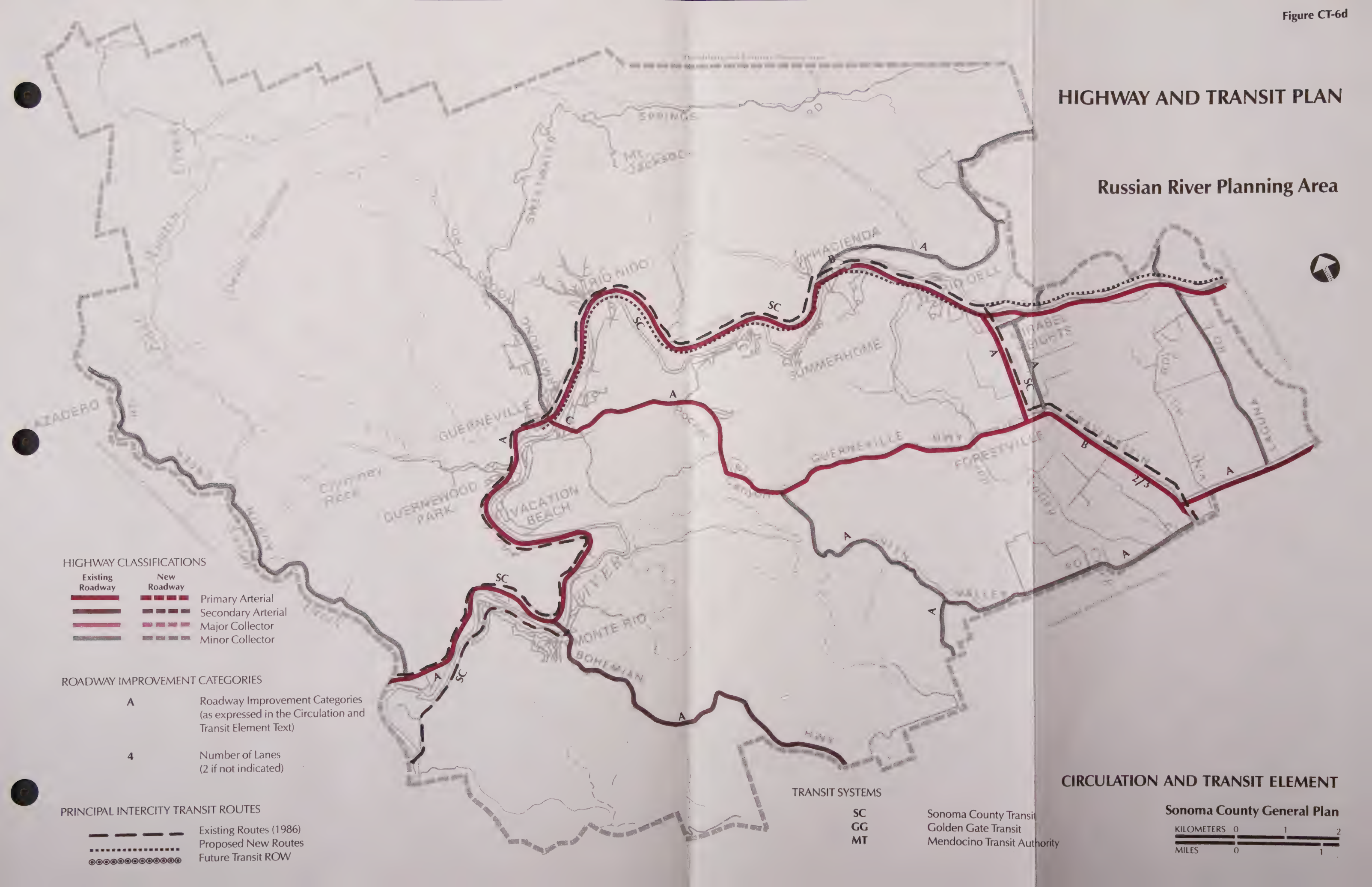
	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

### TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

KILOMETERS	0	1	2
MILES	0	1	2







PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

- Existing Routes (1986)
- Proposed New Routes
- Future Transit ROW

TRANSIT SYSTEMS

- SC Sonoma County Transit
- GG Golden Gate Transit
- MT Mendocino Transit Authority

HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

- | Existing Roadway             | New Roadway                   |                    |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| [Solid Black Line]           | [Dashed Black Line]           | Freeway            |
| [Solid Red Line]             | [Dashed Red Line]             | Primary Arterial   |
| [Solid Dark Grey Line]       | [Dashed Dark Grey Line]       | Secondary Arterial |
| [Solid Light Grey Line]      | [Dashed Light Grey Line]      | Major Collector    |
| [Solid Very Light Grey Line] | [Dashed Very Light Grey Line] | Minor Collector    |

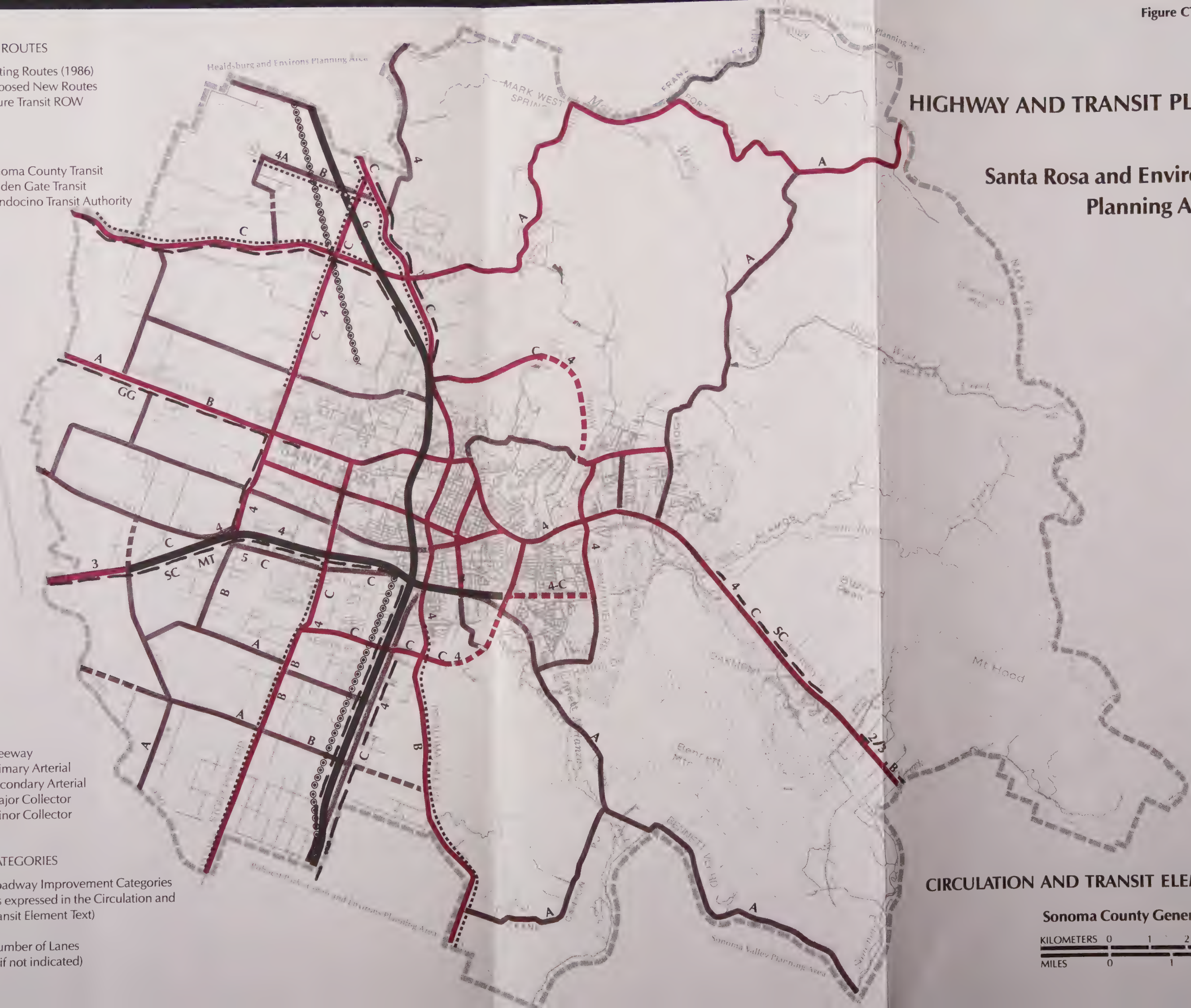
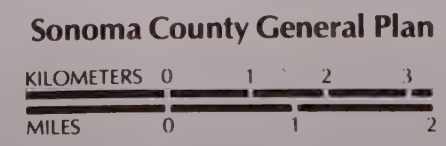
ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

- A Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
- 4 Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

Santa Rosa and Environs Planning Area

CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT







HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

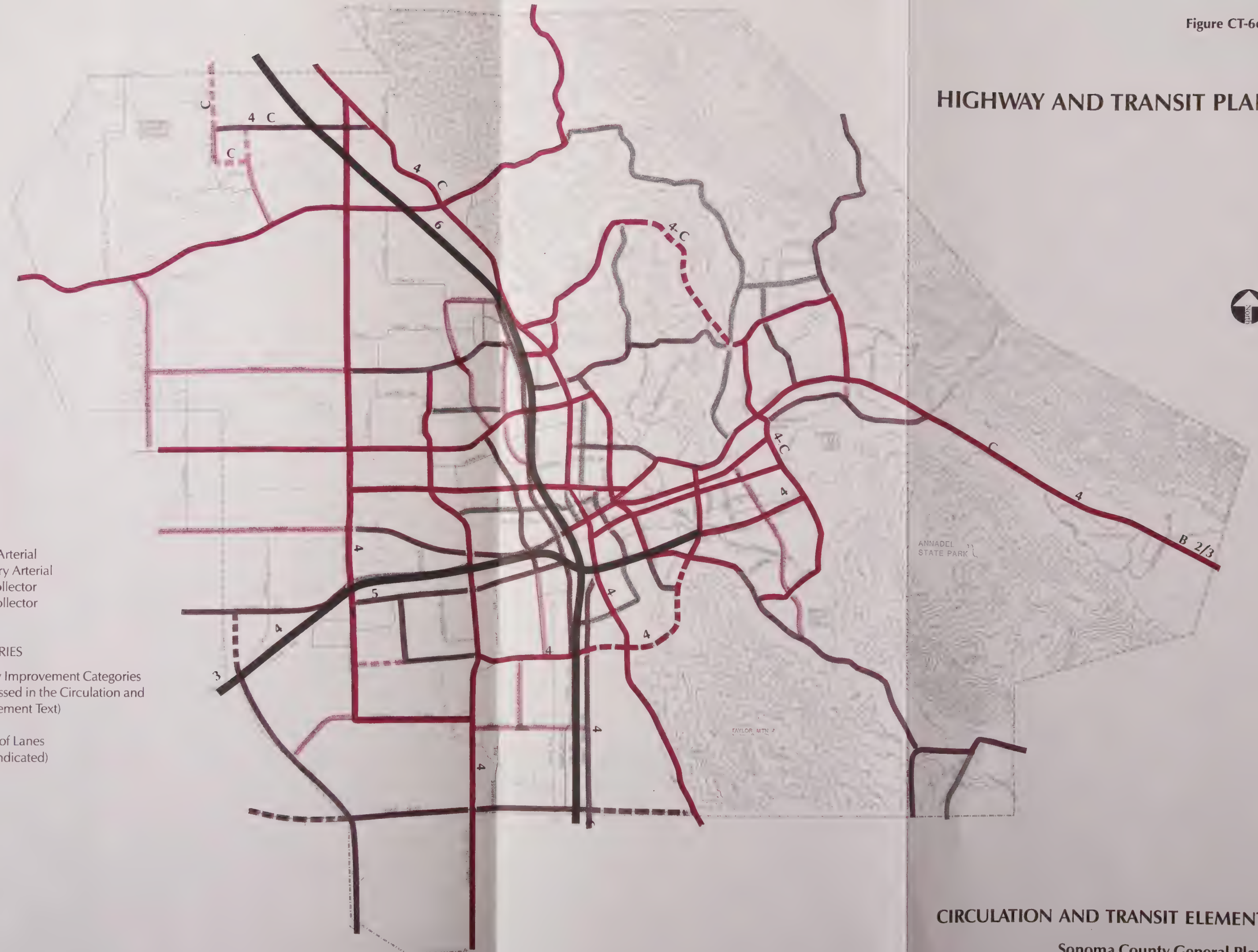


HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Freeway
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

- A Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
- 4 Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)



CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT





**CT-10a:** Use figure CT-6f on page 329 as the improvement plan for this area's arterials and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-10b:** Develop Llano Road as a bypass route on the east side of Sebastopol and extend it northward above Highway 12 to intersect with Occidental Road.

**CT-10c:** Develop an extension of Todd Road as shown on Figures CT-6e(1) on page 323 and CT-6f on page 329 to provide an alternative east-west route to Highway 12. Determine the precise roadway location after environmental review of alternatives.

**CT-10d:** Plan a new alignment of Stony Point Road at its intersection with Highway 116 to eliminate the intersection offset and improve traffic flow.

**CT-10e:** Provide additional transit service by increasing the frequency of buses and express commute service on existing bus routes to respond to growth and transit demand. No new transit routes are included in the plan.

## 7.7 ROHNERT PARK - COTATI AND ENVIRONS

Traffic patterns in the Rohnert Park-Cotati region are significantly affected by north-south commute travel on Highway 101. Other important highways include Old Redwood Highway, Highway 116, the Rohnert Park Expressway, Snyder Lane, and Crane Canyon Road. Regional commute transit and intercity transit exist along the Highway 101 Corridor. Local service is provided in the two cities.

The area's extensive residential development and several large employers also influence traffic patterns. Levels of Service "D" and "E" are projected along U.S. 101 from Cotati to Santa Rosa, along Petaluma Hill Road near Penngrove, on Highway 116, on several streets in Rohnert Park and Cotati and on the Rohnert Park Expressway at its interchange with Highway 101. Other roadways in the area are expected to operate at level of service "C" or better in 2005 with improvements.

In addition to the freeway and arterial improvements outlined in Section 4.2 and 4.3, the following policies and improvements apply to the Rohnert Park - Cotati region:

**CT-11a:** Use figure CT-6g on page 331 as the improvement plan for this area's freeways, arterials, and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-11b:** Plan an extension of the Rohnert Park Expressway to terminate at Stony Point Road.

**CT-11c:** When the Rohnert Park Expressway is constructed, acquire access rights along the roadway where possible, in order to limit access to the maximum extent possible. This policy is intended to supercede the policy established for this improvement in Board Resolution # 84-1075 dated June 5, 1984.

**CT-11d:** Provide additional intercounty and intercity commute bus routes in response to increased transit demand.

**CT-11e:** Provide additional transit service by increasing the frequency of buses on existing routes in response to growth and projected ridership.

## 7.8 PETALUMA AND ENVIRONS

This planning area has the County's highest out-commute rate. The major transportation corridor is the U.S. 101 Freeway. Other principal traffic arteries are State Highways 116 (Stage Gulch Road) and 37, Adobe Road, Lakeville Highway, Stony Point Road, Petaluma-Valley Ford Road, Petaluma-Point Reyes Road, Ely Road, Washington Street, and Petaluma Boulevard. Regional and inter-county commute bus service is available in the

Highway 101 corridor with loops into Petaluma. There is intercity service between Petaluma and other cities. Local service is provided by the Petaluma transit system.

In addition to the transbay and Marin commute, travel patterns are affected by residential development and several large job and retail centers. Several rural roadways are significantly affected by recreational travel on weekends, including Petaluma-Valley Ford Road, U.S. 101, Lakeville Highway and Stage Gulch Road. Highway 101 from Petaluma South, a segment of Adobe Road north of Stage Gulch Road, Old Redwood Highway at its intersection with Highway 101, and several road segments in central and eastern Petaluma are projected to operate below LOS "C" in 2005. All other highways are projected to operate at level "C" or better.

**The following policies and improvements apply to the Petaluma and Environs region:**

**CT-12a** Use figure CT-6h on page 333 as the improvement plan for this area's freeways, arterials, and collectors. All other roadways are local roads.

**CT-12b:** Acquire access rights along Lakeville Highway where possible, in order to limit access to the maximum extent feasible.

**CT-12c:** Develop an additional intercounty/transbay commute bus route to connect East Petaluma area with San Francisco and Marin County. Consider additional intercounty service between Santa Rosa and job centers in Novato and San Rafael, with loop a into Petaluma.

**CT-12d:** Construct truck climbing lanes north and south bound on Highway 101 at Meacham Hill.

**CT-12e:** Expand transit service by increasing the frequency of buses on existing routes in response to growth and transit demand.

## **7.9 SONOMA VALLEY**

The main transportation corridor in the planning area is State Route 12. Other important traffic arteries include Arnold Drive, State Routes 116 (Stage Gulch Road), 121 and 37, and Bennett Valley Road. With the exception of a three lane segment of Highway 12 in central Boyes Springs, all roads are two lanes. Some are improved to urban standards. In 1986 all valley roadways were operating at "C" except for Arnold Drive from Petaluma Avenue to Boyes Boulevard, Highway 12 north of Dunbar Road and from West Thompson Avenue to Boyes Boulevard, and Route 121 east of 8th Street East and its intersection with Highway 12.

Intercity transit service links the south Valley urban area with Santa Rosa and with Petaluma. Transbay commute service consists of "club buses" or subscription bus service.

Traffic conditions are affected by substantial commuter travel to the Santa Rosa area and Marin/San Francisco, recreational travel, and travel within the valley. The potential for future improvements or expansion of highway capacity in the Route 12 corridor is limited by cost and existing development along the roadway in the Boyes Springs/Agua Caliente area. Without substantial improvements, there will not be sufficient highway capacity in this corridor to maintain an acceptable level of service.

Congestion during peak periods is projected on Highway 12 between West Thomsen and Boyes Boulevard, and on Route 121 in the Schellville area. All other roadways in unincorporated areas are projected to function at Level of Service "C" or better in 2005. Although planned improvements may lessen weekend travel delays in the Highway 12 corridor, delays will become worse in the Stage Gulch Road and Highway 121 (Schellville) areas. However, these latter roadways serve regional needs and are primarily the funding responsibility of the state.

**The following policies and improvements apply to the Sonoma Valley region:**



HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

Sebastopol and Environs  
Planning Area



HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

KILOMETERS	0	1	2
MILES	0	1	





# HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

## Rohnert Park – Cotati and Environs Planning Area



### HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Freeway
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

### ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

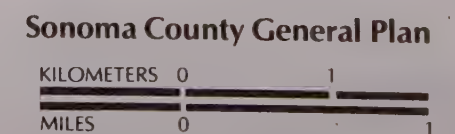
### PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

### TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT







HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

Petaluma and Environs  
Planning Area



CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Freeway
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

Sonoma County General Plan







**CT-13a:** Use Figure CT-6i on page 337 as the improvement plan for this area's collectors. All other roadways are classified as local roads.

**CT-13b:** Develop continuous, two way, left turn lanes on the following roadway segments:

- 1) Highway 12 north of West Thomsen Lane to Agua Caliente Road, and south of the city to the Watmaugh Road Highway 121 intersection.
- 2) El Verano Avenue from Highway 12 to Riverside Drive
- 3) Arnold Drive from Madrone Road to Petaluma Avenue
- 4) Petaluma Avenue from Arnold Drive to Riverside Drive
- 5) Railroad Avenue south of its intersection with Boyes Boulevard
- 6) Napa Road from Broadway to 8th Street East
- 7) 8th Street East from East Napa Street to Highway 12/121; the railroad right-of-way paralleling this roadway may be acquired for potential public use.

**CT-13c:** Develop two travel lanes in each direction and a continuous two way turn lane on Highway 12 from Sonoma northward to West Thomsen Lane.

**CT-13d:** Provide, as needed, signalization and intersection improvements at 21 intersections in the lower Sonoma Valley.

**CT-13e:** The Sonoma Valley Traffic Study provides a detailed traffic analysis which identifies local roadways and improvements needed to reduce traffic congestion to acceptable levels of service. Consider additional traffic mitigation or other funding for local improvements identified in the Traffic Study in addition to any needed funding for the countywide circulation and transit system.

**CT-13f:** Require developers of proposed projects to install or finance a portion of the costs of off-site improvements needed to accommodate project generated traffic and maintain acceptable levels of service on area roadways.

**CT-13g:** Parcels fronting on Highway 12 between Sonoma and West Thomsen Avenue shall be required to dedicate right-of-way sufficient to accommodate planned improvements as a condition of all discretionary permits where adequate nexus exists.

**CT-13h:** Discourage new encroachments which provide direct access to Highway 12 and encourage access using existing intersections, roadways, and driveways.

**CT-13i:** Where possible preserve by dedication, acquisition, design or other mechanism right-of-way sufficient to accommodate five lanes on Highway 12 between West Thomsen Avenue and Agua Caliente Road to meet traffic needs beyond 2005 by establishing long range building setback lines in cooperation with Caltrans.

**CT-13j:** Consider an ordinance requiring payment of fees to pay for part of the costs needed to maintain an acceptable level of service on arterial and collector roadways. Any fee must be reasonably related to project traffic and improvement costs.

**CT-13k:** Include new intercounty, transbay express commute bus service or club bus to connect the Sonoma Valley to San Francisco and Marin County. Consider service as far northward as Glen Ellen, Sonoma State Hospital, and the urbanized area of the Southern Valley, continuing to the Bay Area along Routes 121 and 37 to U.S. 101 in Novato. Establish the route based on projected ridership levels and cost factors.

**CT-13l:** Develop additional intercity bus service as follows:

- 1) provide an express commute service to link the lower Sonoma Valley to Santa Rosa and service in response to growth, ridership, and cost factors.

- 2) increase the frequency of service along existing intercity routes in response to growth and transit demand.

**CT-13m:** Prepare detailed circulation and transit plans for urban unincorporated areas adjacent to Sonoma as part of any updates of specific or area plans for those areas.

## 8.0 CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:

### Circulation and Transit Program 1 - Ordinances Establishing Traffic Mitigation Fees

**Program Description:** Prepare ordinances which establish traffic mitigation and roadway improvement fees. Ordinances could be adopted on a countywide and/or small-area basis. Proposed ordinances may accompany preparation of any new or updates of existing specific plans. In general, ordinances shall require payment, at the time of building permit approval, of traffic mitigation fees. The amount of any fee imposed shall bear a reasonable relationship to the traffic generated by a use and the costs of facility improvements necessary to maintain an acceptable level of service.

### Circulation and Transit Program 2 - Local Sales Tax Measure

**Program Description:** SB 142 (Deddeh) and SB 878 (Boatright) authorize Sonoma County to levy, upon approval by a majority of the voters, a sales tax increase of 0.5 to 1.0 percent for public transit, state highway or local street and road projects. The eight cities, representatives of transit agencies, Caltrans, MTC, and representatives from the private sector should participate in developing a transportation expenditure plan (TEP). The TEP should include a list of projects and priorities. The plan should specify: 1) the extent to which state and federal funding will be needed, 2) project costs, 3) the amount of the proposed tax and its duration, and 4) any bonding provisions. After approval by the County and a majority of the cities representing a majority of the incorporated population, the plan can be placed on the ballot for voter approval.

### Circulation and Transit Program 3 - Monitoring Program

**Program Description:** Continue and expand the County Public Works traffic counting program. Include regular truck classification counts and some counts on State Highways. Conduct vehicle occupancy counts during peak hours at between 20 and 30 locations every other year, in order to establish trends in vehicle occupancies over time. Conduct a through travel survey at major gateways to the County and conduct an all-day on-board transit survey on trip origins, trip destinations, and trip purpose. Incorporate this data into the County transportation model.

Use the transportation model to evaluate continued correlation between the Land Use and Circulation Elements, to determine mitigation fees, and to evaluate new development.

### Circulation and Transit Program 4 - Sonoma County Transit Agency

**Program Description:** Maintain a transit agency to provide intercity transit services and provide local service by contract within cities. Services may include express commute buses. Make Sonoma County Transit responsible for annual preparation of 5 year Transit Development Plans which conform to UMTA and MTC criteria in order to qualify for federal and state funding programs for transit.

### Circulation and Transit Program 5 - Capital Improvements Program/Budget

**Program Description:** Utilize the capital improvements program to establish priorities and scheduling for roadway construction projects and transit facility construction. Finance roadway and transit facility construction through a combination of revenue sources, including the general fund and categorical grants such as UMTA and TDA from federal and state programs.



HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PLAN

Sonoma Valley Planning Area



HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Existing Roadway	New Roadway	
		Primary Arterial
		Secondary Arterial
		Major Collector
		Minor Collector

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT CATEGORIES

A	Roadway Improvement Categories (as expressed in the Circulation and Transit Element Text)
4	Number of Lanes (2 if not indicated)

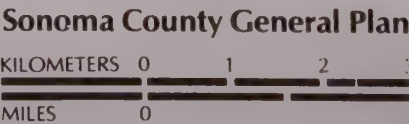
PRINCIPAL INTERCITY TRANSIT ROUTES

	Existing Routes (1986)
	Proposed New Routes
	Future Transit ROW

TRANSIT SYSTEMS

SC	Sonoma County Transit
GG	Golden Gate Transit
MT	Mendocino Transit Authority

CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT







**Circulation and Transit Program 6 - Transportation Planning Council (TPC)**

**Program Description:** Continue to staff a Transportation Planning Council which coordinates of public transportation services in the county. The TPC shall be responsible for overseeing the preparation of integrated, countywide 5 year Transit Development Plans and for coordinating highway and mass transit facility improvements.

**Circulation and Transit Program 7 - Specific Plan Circulation Elements**

**Program Description:** Require new specific plans to contain a detailed plan, program, and financing arrangements for local roadway and transit improvements. Detailed traffic || studies could be undertaken on a small area basis to determine roadway and intersection improvements needed as a result of planned growth. Updates of existing specific plans may also include preparation of new circulation elements where appropriate.





**AIR TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401**

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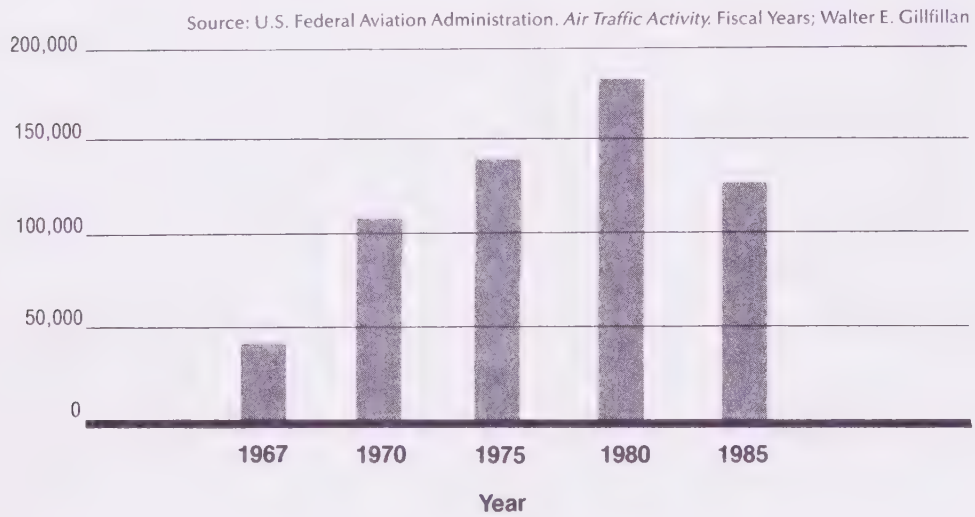
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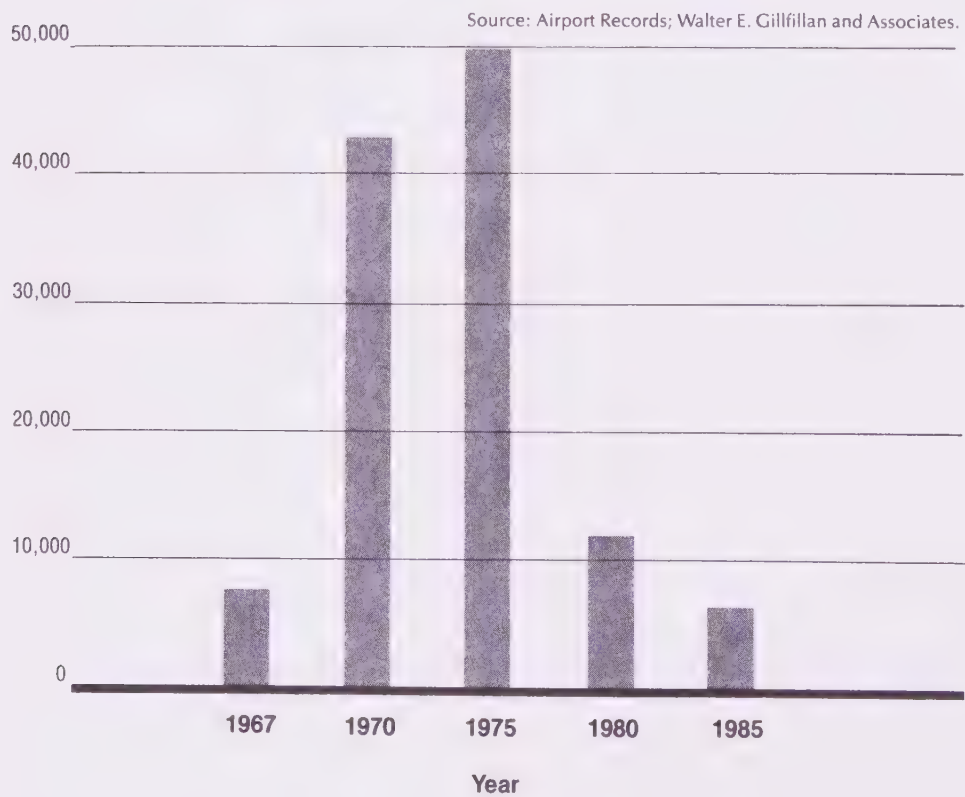
**Figure AT-1**

**HISTORICAL RECORD OF AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS AT THE SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT.**



**Figure AT-2**

**HISTORICAL RECORD OF AIR PASSENGER ACTIVITY AT SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT.**





Flight: Refers to an aircraft operation - either a departure or an arrival.

General Aviation: General aviation includes all aviation activity except activity by airlines and the military. The privately-owned aircraft is the most common type of general aviation aircraft and activities include:

- personal and business travel
- flight instruction and training
- recreational flying
- commercial uses (eg. aerial application fire fighting, photography, mapping, air taxi, charter and emergency services)

General aviation aircraft includes airplanes, helicopters, ultralights and speciality craft (eg. blimps, balloons and hang-gliders).

Maximum Single-event Noise Level (Lmax): Lmax is a measure that indicates the maximum noise level reached during a single aircraft overflight, expressed in dBA, at a specified point of measurement.

Public-Use Airport: A publicly- or privately-owned airport where public use is invited or allowed without restriction, as defined by the state Division of Aeronautics; such airports must have a California Airport Permit issued by the Division.

Scheduled Airlines: Scheduled airlines engage in regularly scheduled air passenger service, and operate on intrastate and interstate routes.

Single-Event Noise Exposure Level (SENEL): SENEL is a measure of the noise generated by a single aircraft overflight. It includes the loudness of the event during the time interval that the event is above the threshold level.

## **2.3 EXISTING AIRPORTS AND SERVICE LEVELS**

There were seven airports in Sonoma County open for public use as of 1986 (Figure AT-3). Three were privately-owned (Sonoma Skypark, Santa Rosa Air Center and Sonoma Valley), three were owned by cities (Cloverdale, Healdsburg and Petaluma airports) and one was owned by the County of Sonoma (Sonoma County Airport). These airports all have general aviation activity consisting of single-engine and twin-engine piston-powered aircraft. Twin-engine turboprop and jet-powered aircraft utilize the Sonoma County Airport and, to a lesser extent, the Petaluma Airport. Sonoma County Airport is the only point for commercial air passenger service. In addition, the airport has been designated as a fire base by the California Department of Forestry which uses aerial tankers and helicopters in forest fire suppression operations. The current activity levels at the seven airports are shown in Table AT-1. A general description of the facilities available at public use airports in the county is noted in Table AT-2.

## **2.4 INSTITUTIONAL ROLES**

The public and private sectors both play significant roles in air transportation. Authority and responsibilities are shared by a number of public agencies and the resulting relationships are important to the implementation of County policies.

### **2.4.1 County of Sonoma**

County jurisdiction affects aviation in two principal areas -- as airport owner and as public agency with zoning authority over private lands adjacent to the airports. As airport owner, the County can develop the Sonoma County Airport, maintain and operate it and establish operational rules and regulations. Local airport proprietors are limited by provisions of federal and state laws. Under federal law an airport proprietor may not interfere with interstate commerce or discriminate among airport users. In addition, the California Public Utilities Code





TABLE AT-1: Estimated Existing Aviation Activity Levels at Sonoma County Public Use Airports

Airport	Estimated Activity			
	General Aviation		Airline	
	Based Aircraft* (1985)	Annual Operations (000)	Annual Operations (000)	Total Annual Passengers (000)
Cloverdale	17	10	0	0
Healdsburg	56	27	0	0
Petaluma	72	50**	0	0
Santa Rosa Air Center	78***	80***	0	0
Sonoma County	434	116	3	10
Sonoma Skypark	45	50**	0	0
Sonoma Valley	150	50**	0	0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>852</u>	<u>383</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>10</u>

\* CALTRANS. Annual Airport Inspections. February-August 1985.

\*\* Aviation Planning Services. The Santa Rosa Air Center's Role in The Sonoma County Airport System. June, 1981.

\*\*\* 1986 activity levels are substantially reduced.

Source: Walter E. Gillfillan and Associates, from: Federal Aviation Administration. National Plan of Integrated Airport System; 1984-1993.

TABLE AT-2: Existing Facilities at Public Use Airports in Sonoma County

Airport	Ownership	Acres	Runways				Services		
			Number	Paved	Lighted	Length	Fuel	Repair	IP
Cloverdale	City	58	1	Yes	Yes	3,155*	Yes	Yes	No
Healdsburg	City	50	1	Yes	Yes	2,707	Yes	Yes	No
Petaluma	City	220	1	Yes	Yes	3,600	Yes	Yes	Yes
Santa Rosa Air Center	Private	500	1	Yes	No	7,000*	-	-	No
Sonoma County	County	940	2	Yes	Yes	5,115	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sonoma Skypark	Private	27	1	Yes	No	2,500*	Yes	Yes	No
Sonoma Valley	Private	79	2	No	No	2,700	Yes	Yes	No

IP - Instrument Procedure

\* - Lesser length available for landing

Source: Walter Gillfillan and Associates, from: Federal Aviation Administration, Aeronautical Chart; Form 5010 and Jeppesen, Airways Manual.

expresses requirements for airport permits, noise regulations and funding grants. An airport owner is also subject to federal requirements for airport security, crash-fire-rescue, facility maintenance and funding grant conditions.

In its land use role the County is responsible, under the California Public Utilities Code, to act in accordance with recommendations of the County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) or the County may overrule their recommendation by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Supervisors if findings are made that the proposed action is consistent with the purposes of Article 3.5 of the State Aeronautics Act.

#### **2.4.2 Airport Land Use Commission**

Sections 21670-21678 of the California Public Utilities Code require formation, under certain conditions, of an ALUC and an environs plan to achieve compatible land uses in the areas adjacent to airports within an ALUC's jurisdiction. The Sonoma County ALUC has adopted an Airport Land Use Policy Plan which defines compatible land uses as they relate to noise, airspace and safety.

Each local agency whose general plan includes areas covered by the ALUC plan must submit those plans to the Commission for its review. The Commission must make a determination of consistency or inconsistency with the Commission's plan. The Commission's determination may be overruled by a two-thirds vote of the governing body of a city or county. In addition, the following subsequent actions must be reviewed by the Commission:

- amendment to a general plan or specific plan
- adoption or approval of a zoning ordinance
- adoption or approval of a building regulation

Proposed changes to an airport master plan must also be submitted to the ALUC for a determination of consistency with its policy plan.

#### **2.4.3 Airport Owners**

A city airport owner has the same responsibilities as a county airport owner. In some cases, control of the land uses adjacent to a city-owned airport is within the jurisdiction of the county of Sonoma. Privately-owned airports are affected by state and federal regulations to a lesser extent, but they are still required to provide for safe operations. Private airport owners are dependent upon city and county land use actions to protect their compatibility with the community.

#### **2.4.4 Private Sector**

Aircraft operated in Sonoma County are, for the most part, privately owned and operated; general aviation and airline owners may operate their aircraft at their discretion, but are subject to the FARs governing aircraft operations and local airport rules and regulations.

#### **2.4.5 Regional Agencies**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is a regional agency established under state law and charged with the tasks of creating a regional transportation plan and allocating federal and state funds in accordance with the plan. All aviation funds from state and federal sources that go to cities and counties must be approved by MTC. MTC prepares aviation forecasts, conducts special planning studies and collects data on airports in the San Francisco Bay Region. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), in cooperation with MTC, collects demographic and land use planning data and forecasts.

#### **2.4.6 State of California**

As previously noted, the State has jurisdiction in areas specified in the Public Utilities Code as noted below:



Airport Permit: An airport permit, issued by Caltrans' Division of Aeronautics, is required at all airports open for public use. Specified safety conditions must be met.

Noise Regulations: Noise regulations require that any airport deemed to have a "noise problem" must develop a noise mitigation plan. None of the airports in Sonoma County have been identified as having a noise problem.

Conditions of Grants: Specific conditions may be imposed if an airport receives grant-in-aid funds under the State program.

#### **2.4.7 Federal Aviation Administration**

Federal government preemptions cover aircraft in flight, aircraft engaged in interstate and foreign commerce and discrimination among airport users. Because Sonoma County Airport has airline service, FAR provisions dealing with security and crash-fire-rescue apply. Special conditions that were part of the original quit claim deed which transferred the airport from the federal government to the County are a part of each grant-in-aid program accepted by the County.

### **3.0 AIR TRANSPORTATION DEMAND AND THE COUNTY AIRPORT SYSTEM**

#### **3.1 PROJECTED DEMAND FOR AIR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE**

The demand projections used in this element reflect recent trends in the aviation industry as well as forecasted economic and population growth. With respect to general aviation, it is estimated that airport facilities can be improved so the projected demand can be served. Demand for only a part, about 40 percent, of the air passenger travel to and from Sonoma County is projected to be served by commuter and scheduled airline operations at the Sonoma County Airport. The remaining 60 percent of the air travelers are expected to use ground transportation to access other airports in the San Francisco Bay Area - - principally San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and, to a lesser extent, Oakland International Airport (OAK).

##### **3.1.1 General Aviation Activity**

The "based-aircraft" projections for Sonoma County through the year 2005 are conservative and reflect the recent significant downward trend in the aviation industry. An annual growth rate of about two percent is assumed, about one-half the rate commonly projected in the late 1970s. Aircraft operation forecasts are also lower compared to projections done in the 1970s; the average used in this element is about 250 annual operations per based aircraft (in the past 500-700 annual operations per based aircraft was used). The types of aircraft are likely to be similar to those in use as of 1986, but there will be an increased use of composite materials and smaller aircraft for personal use. General aviation activity forecasts indicate that by the year 2005, there will be 1,300 based aircraft and 344,000 annual operations at the various public-use airports in Sonoma County.

##### **3.1.2 Commuter Airline Services**

According to a state-wide survey (California Division of Aeronautics. The California Aviation System Plan. May, 1981) about 55 percent of the county's commercial air passengers are intrastate. This means that 45 percent of the county's passengers are potential customers for commuter connections to SFO. As of 1986, about ninety percent of the air travelers from Sonoma County used ground access (automobile or the airport buses) to get to SFO. It is estimated that the availability of non-stop airline service to Los Angeles could divert about 20 percent of the commuter passengers to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) connections. This combination of factors would result in commuter service levels of about 50,000 total annual passengers (about 140 average daily passengers) by the year 2005. Using a 15-passenger aircraft with a 65 percent load factor, this would result in about 14 average daily flights (seven arrivals plus seven departures) by twin-engine, turboprop type aircraft; fewer operations would be necessary if larger aircraft or higher load factors were used. The annual operations generated from these flights would be about 5,000 in the year 2005.

### 3.1.3 Scheduled Airline Services

The following basic assumptions were used to formulate the projected air passenger demand levels for scheduled commercial air carrier services:

- MTC projections of air passenger demand in the Bay Area reflect the future demand for air travel within the Region.
- In the regional forecast, medium growth scenario, the total air passenger demand in the region in the year 2005 is estimated to be 53.7 Million Annual Passengers (MAP).
- In the 1985 MTC Air Passenger Survey, 2.6 percent of all Bay Area passenger trips began in Sonoma County. Based on that figure, by the year 2005, approximately 1,400,000 annual air passengers would be traveling to and from Sonoma County. By comparison, in 1985, 720,000 air passengers traveled to and from Sonoma County and in 1980 the number stood at 385,000.

The recent availability of aircraft (such as the BAe 146) that suit smaller, short-haul markets provides an opportunity for service between the Los Angeles area and larger, outlying communities in the Bay Area. Surveys reveal that about half of Bay Area air passengers are travelling to Southern California. Dependable service at the Sonoma County Airport could capture about 70 percent of the Sonoma County-Southern California air travel market. In addition, about ten percent of the scheduled airline passengers connecting to interstate and international flights through LAX would also be attracted to service from the Sonoma County Airport.

These factors result in a projection that scheduled airline service at Sonoma County Airport could generate 560,000 total annual passengers by the year 2005 (about 1,500 per day). With a 66 percent load factor, this would require about 15 arrivals and 15 departures per day using an 80-seat aircraft. This service would generate about 10,900 annual operations in the year 2005. Scheduled airline service at Sonoma County Airport has been reduced to about 10,200 annual operations in 2005 due to potential air quality impacts resulting from the projected level of service.

## 3.2 COUNTY AIRPORT SYSTEM

In the year 2005, the county airport system will be comprised, as it was in 1986, of publicly and privately owned airports open to public use. Even with the anticipated closure of the Santa Rosa Air Center, improvements to existing facilities will accommodate the projected demand without development of new airports. Private airport facilities that serve specific aircraft owners or special uses, such as ultralight aircraft, will continue to function.

### 3.2.1 Likely Service Levels

The forecasted demand for general aviation in the County is contemplated to be accommodated within the next five to ten years at the seven airports that were open to the public as of 1986, except for the Santa Rosa Air Center, which is expected to be closed to aviation in the short term. If the Santa Rosa Air Center (privately-owned airport) were to close, demand could be accommodated at the remaining six airports as shown in Table AT-3.

The types of aircraft used in the future at airports in the county are likely to be similar to the types that were in use as of 1986. Tanker operations are contemplated to continue through 1990 and the present equipment will continue to be used. Beyond that time, there may not be parts and engines available for the piston-engine equipment that is currently being used. Inexpensive, surplus aircraft with high load capabilities and the ability to maneuver slowly at low altitudes may not be available. Replacement aircraft will probably be two-engine turboprop or C-130 type aircraft.



TABLE AT-3: Projected Aviation Activity Levels at Sonoma County Public Use Airports - 2005

Airport	Projected Activity Levels			
	Based Aircraft	Annual Operations (000)		
		Local	Itinerant	Total
Cloverdale	50	3	3	6
Healdsburg	100	8	8	16
Petaluma	250	30	32	62
Sonoma Valley	100	6	14	20
Sonoma Skypark+	---	--	--	--
Sonoma County	800	96	144	255 *
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>359</b>

\*2005 - General Aviation 240,000; commuter airline 5,000; scheduled airline 10,200

+Sonoma Skypark projections are included in those for Sonoma County Airport

Source: Walter Gillfillan and Associates

### 3.2.2 Facility Requirements

Airport improvements at the four non-county owned airports needed to accommodate future aircraft activity will be modest and consist mostly of aircraft parking and storage. Individual airport master plans will denote specific requirements.

Facility requirements at Sonoma County Airport will be more comprehensive and will be detailed in the airport master plan. The following planning guidelines indicate the general scope of the improvements:

Facility requirements at Sonoma County Airport will be more comprehensive and will be detailed in the airport master plan. The following planning guidelines indicate the general scope of the improvements:

Facility	1986 Level	2005 Planning Level
Runways	2	3 improved
Taxiways	-	unimproved
Aircraft Storage		
Parking Apron		
Hangers		
Terminal		
Building		enlarge
Apron		enlarge
Automobile Parking		enlarge
Access Road	-	improve
Approach Protection Zone	-	enlarge
Crash-Fire-Rescue	-	improve

## **4.0 COMPATIBILITY WITH THE COMMUNITY**

Airports provide county residents with the benefits of air transportation. At the same time, it is important that aircraft operations be compatible with adjacent community areas. Noise, safe airspace and safety to those on the ground are issues of particular interest and importance. The issue of noise is a major concern for residents near airports, particularly where large aircraft are operating. Figure AT-4 provides information about the 1986 level of noise exposure for areas surrounding the Sonoma County Airport.

### **4.1 PROJECTED NOISE EXPOSURE**

Most of the aircraft noise in Sonoma County is generated by general aviation aircraft. Noise contours at each airport are established by large numbers of relatively quiet single-engine aircraft. Some jet aircraft generate a high single-event noise, but jet operations are infrequent so they do not significantly contribute to the annualized cumulative noise impact measured on the CNEL index. One exception to this finding is at Sonoma County Airport where aerial tankers contribute to the cumulative impact on the north end of the airport in the primary approach corridor. A map depicting the future noise exposure at the Sonoma County Airport is shown in Figure AT-5. This diagram represents the noise exposure that would occur if the airport were to reach its ultimate capacity of 550,000 annual operations. It is the intent that the capacity of the airport would be protected to this level of activity.

The Sonoma County ALUC has established a noise/land use compatibility matrix which identifies the acceptable range of noise levels for various types of land uses. Generally, under ALUC policies, new residential land uses are acceptable if exterior noise levels are at or below 60 dB CNEL; this is at least 5 dB more restrictive than California's Airport Noise Regulations. The lower limit is based on the quiet rural environment found in Sonoma County. The projected future contours for the other airports in the county are taken from the ALUC Policy Plan and are shown in Figures AT-6 through AT-11.

The ALUC has also established an interior single-even noise limit for residential land uses to ensure that homes built near airports in areas with acceptable exterior noise levels are adequately designed to protect interior spaces from high single-even noise. The limits were established to prevent speech interference during the day and sleep interference at night.

Analyses of future airport operations, with and without air carrier operations, indicate that air carrier activity could be accommodated at Sonoma County Airport without unacceptable environmental impacts, provided the type of aircraft and number of aircraft operations are appropriately limited. With overlapping and unclear jurisdictional boundaries between State, Federal and local agencies, future regulation of airport noise is a complex task. Development of airport noise policy by the county has included consideration of federal preemptions including the FARS, the Airline Deregulation Act, prohibitions against interference with interstate commerce, and prohibitions against discriminating among airport users.

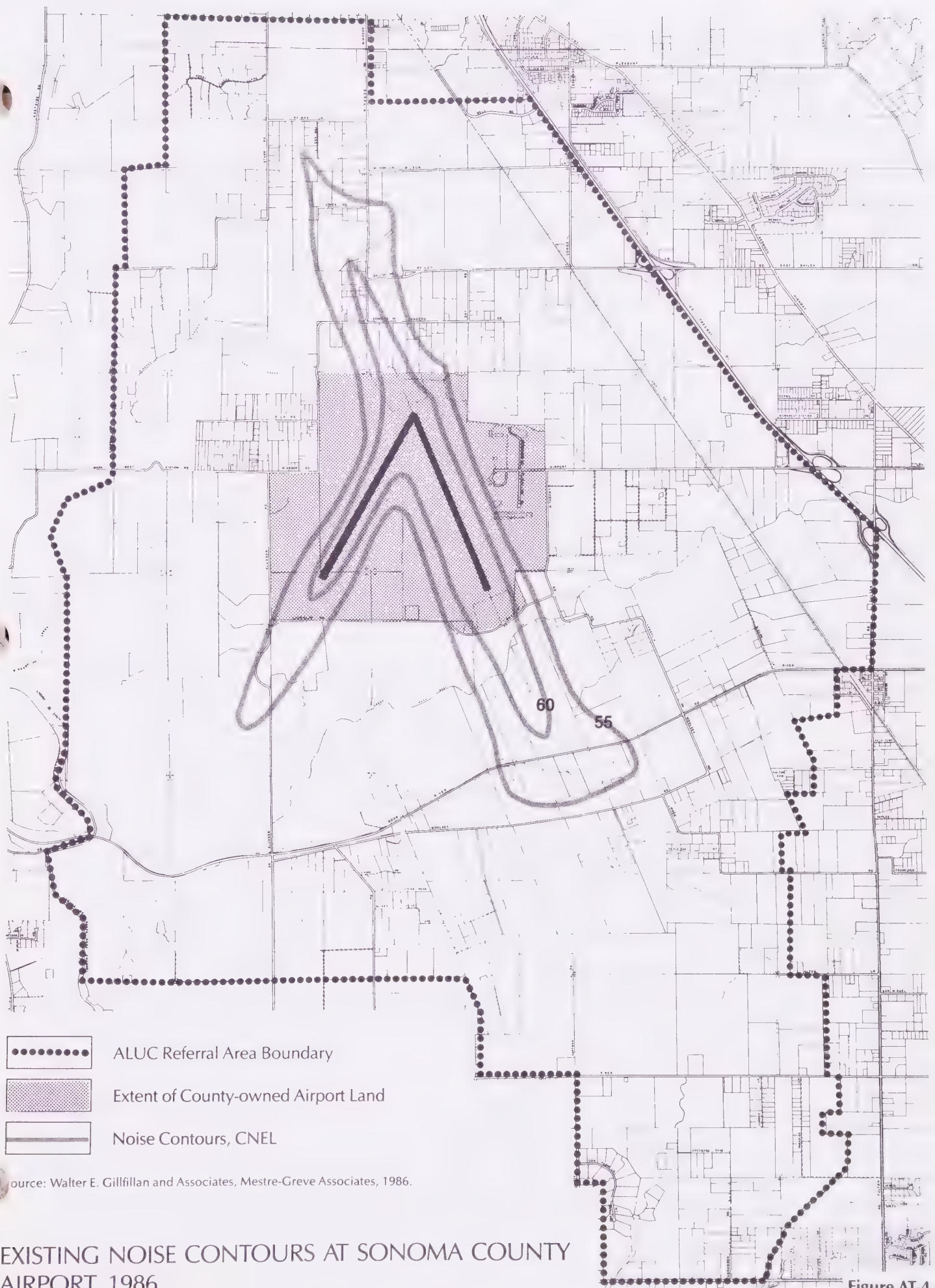
### **4.2 AIRSPACE**

Criteria used by the FAA to determine which structures are or could be a hazard to air navigation are contained in FAR, Part 77. These standards have been adopted by the Sonoma County ALUC and are also indicated in Figures AT-6 through AT-11. As of 1986, there were no obstructions that restricted the use of any of the airports in Sonoma County.

### **4.3 SAFETY ON THE GROUND**

The FAA provides for clear zones off of the ends of each runway to protect aircraft in flight and people on the ground from aircraft accidents. Clear zones are identified by the FAA as the highest risk areas. For six of the general aviation airports in the county, the trapezoidal clear zone extends outward 1,200' from the end of the runway. At the Sonoma County Airport the area extends 2,700' out from the end of the runway because of the





EXISTING NOISE CONTOURS AT SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT, 1986

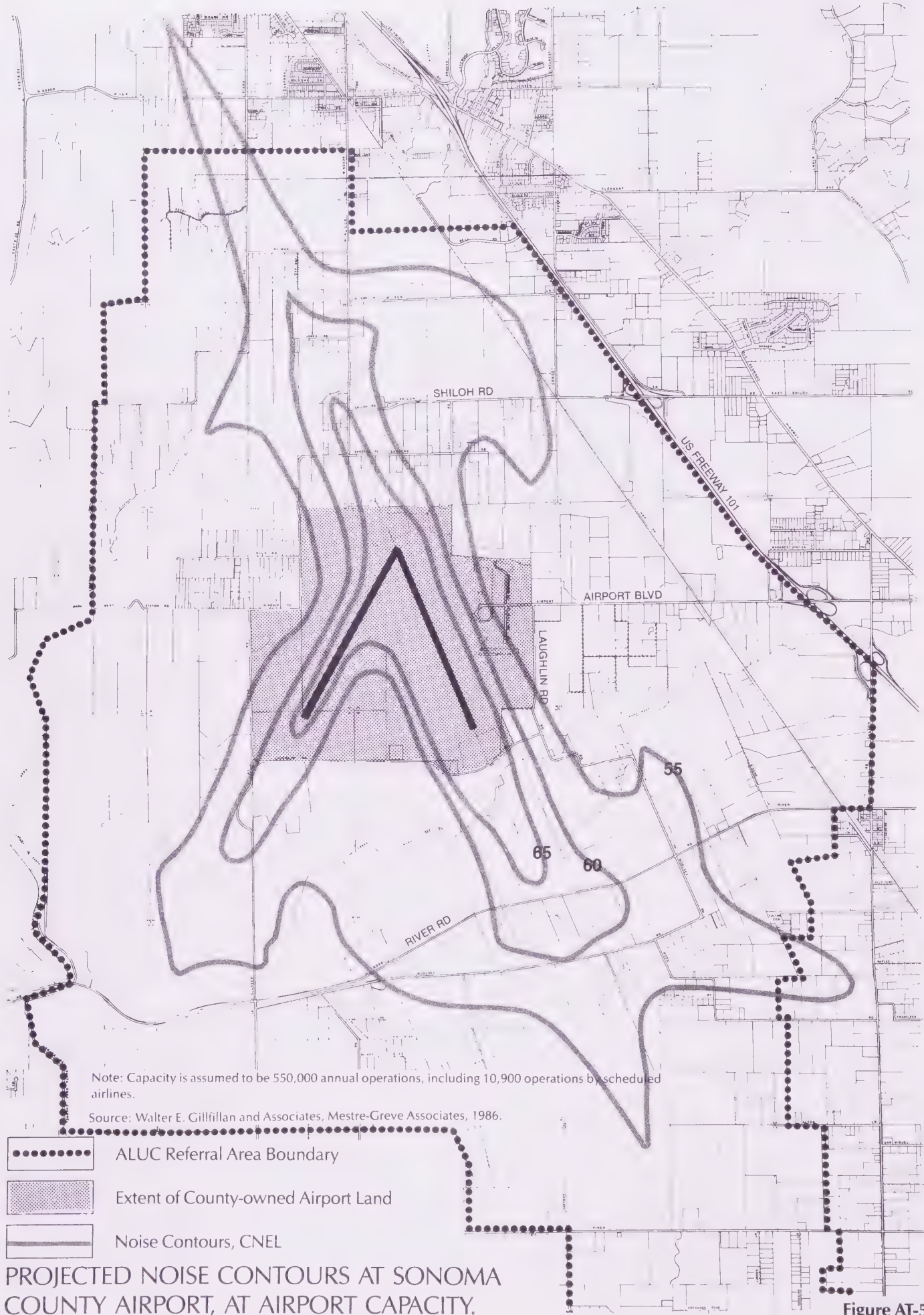


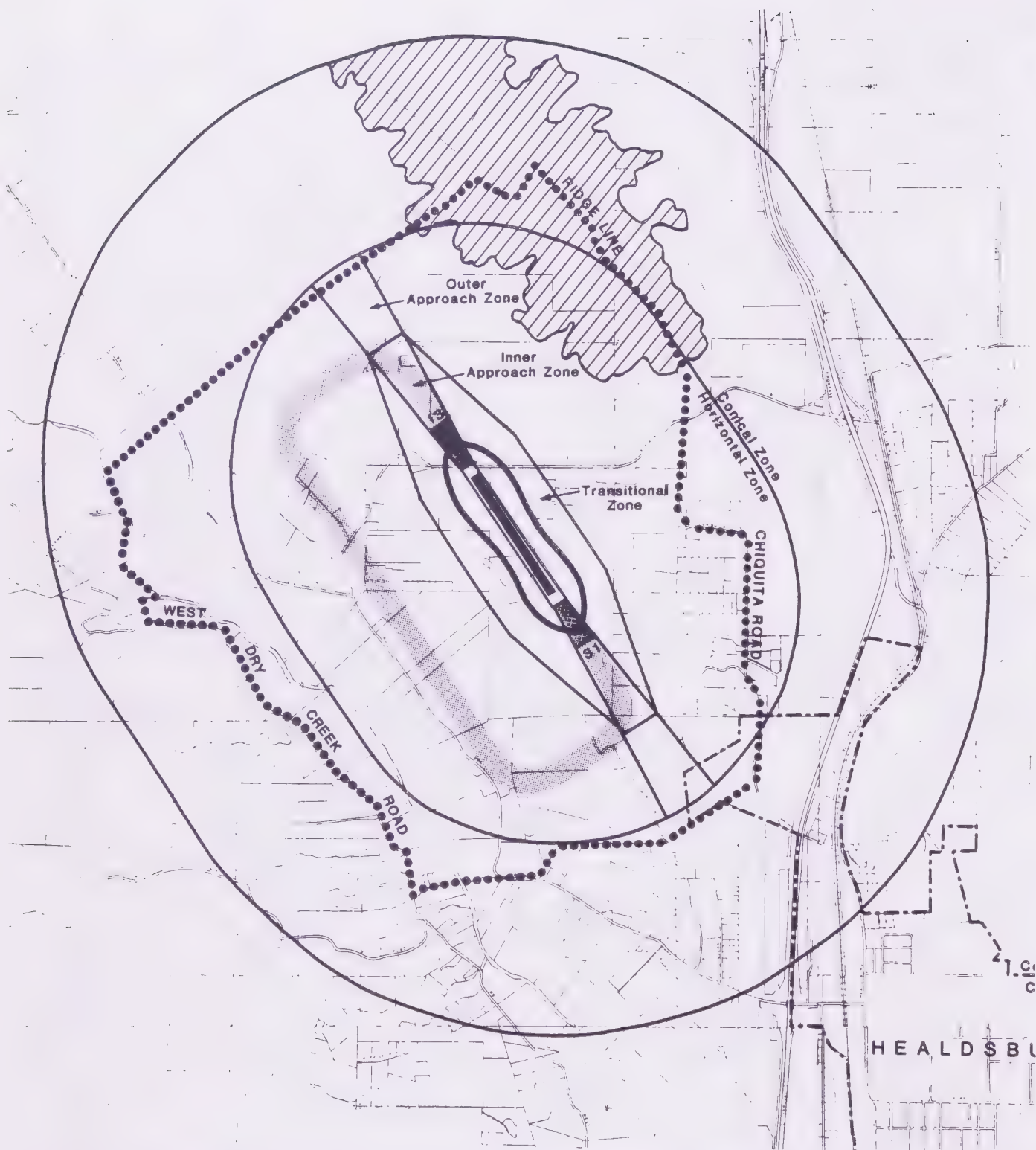
Figure AT-5





PROJECTED NOISE CONTOUR AT CLOVERDALE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, AT AIRPORT CAPACITY.

Figure AT-6



ALUC Referral Area Boundary

60 dB CNEL Contour

Clear Zone



Terrain Penetration of FAR Part 77 Surface

City Limit

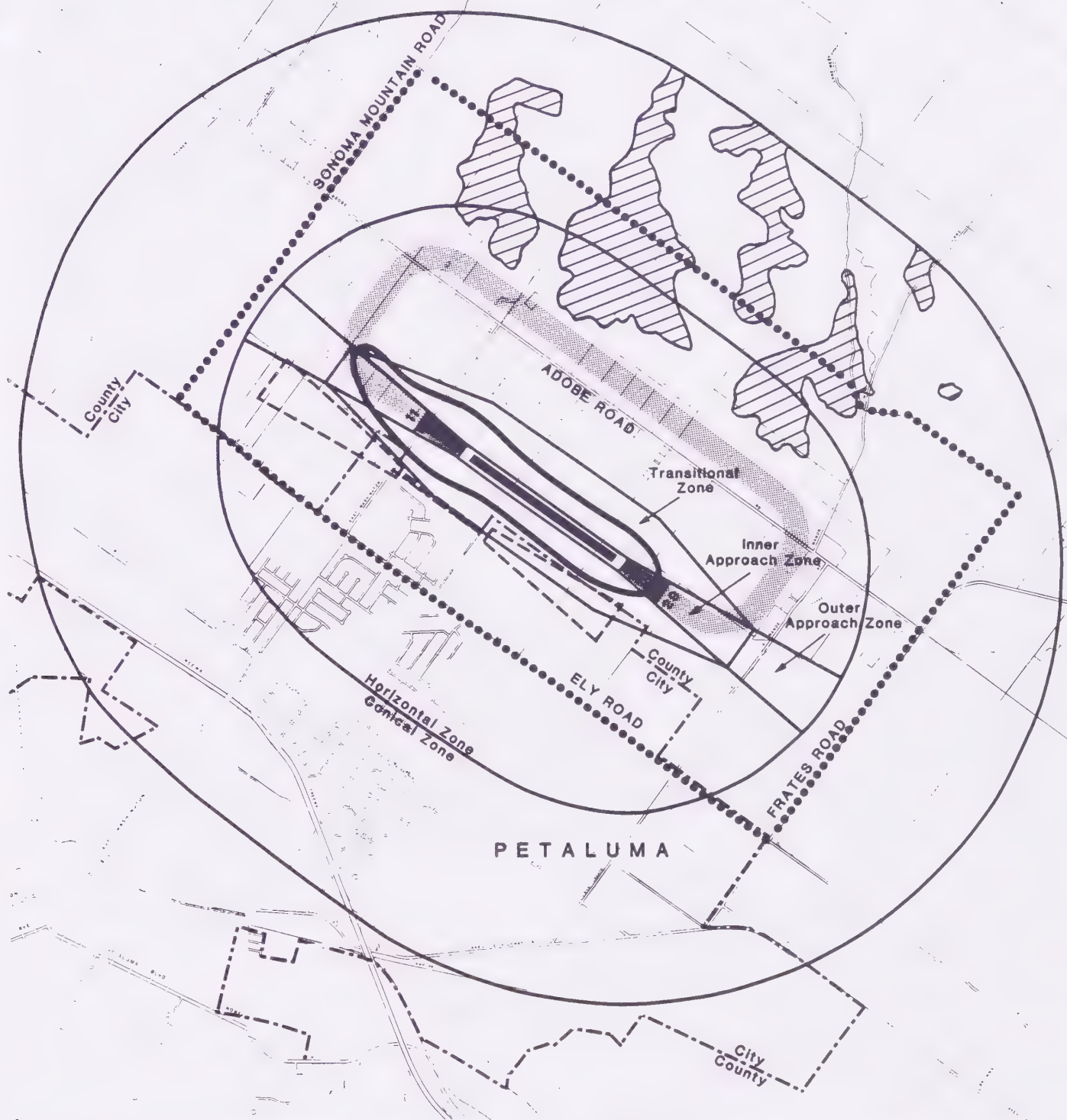
Note: Assumes 96,000 annual operations


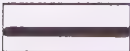

Source: Sonoma County ALUC Policy Plan: Hodges and Shutt, 1981.


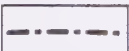
PROJECTED NOISE CONTOUR AT HEALDSBURG MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, AT AIRPORT CAPACITY.

Figure AT-7





-  ALUC Referral Area Boundary
-  60 dB CNEL Contour
-  Clear Zone

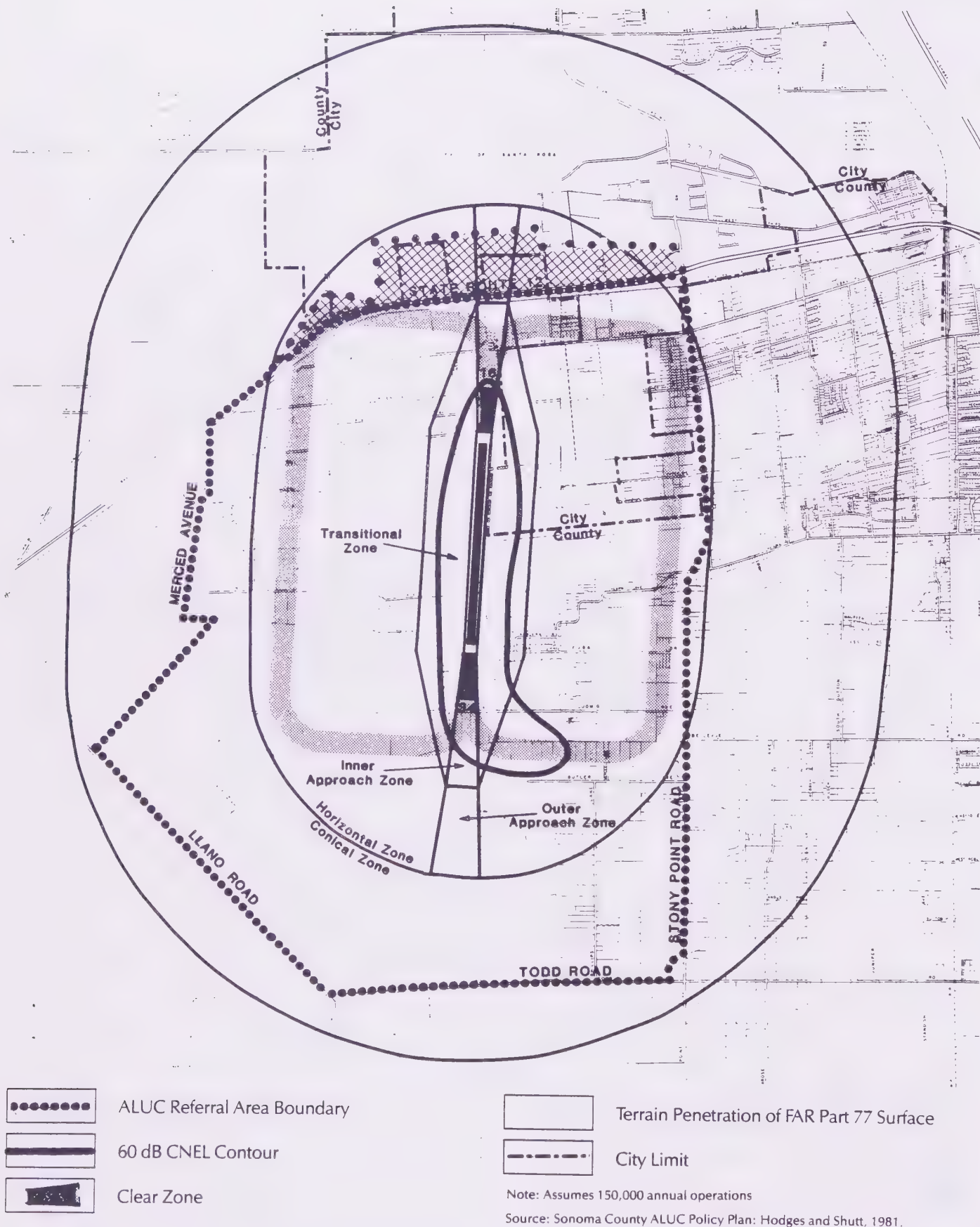
-  Terrain Penetration of FAR Part 77 Surface
-  City Limit

Note: Assumes 147,000 annual operations

Source: Sonoma County ALUC Policy Plan: Hodges and Shutt, 1981.

PROJECTED NOISE CONTOUR AT PETALUMA MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, AT AIRPORT CAPACITY.

Figure AT-8



PROJECTED NOISE CONTOUR AT SANTA ROSA AIR CENTER, AT AIRPORT CAPACITY

Figure AT-9





Note: Assumes 65,000 annual operations

Source: Sonoma County ALUC Policy Plan: Hodges and Shutt, 1981

PROJECTED NOISE CONTOUR AT SONOMA VALLEY AIRPORT, AT AIRPORT CAPACITY.

Figure AT-10



PROJECTED NOISE CONTOUR AT SONOMA SKYPARK, AT AIRPORT CAPACITY.

Figure AT-11



Instrument Landing System (ILS). For facilities like Sonoma County Airport, the FAA will fund property acquisitions in an area up to 5,000' to achieve overall compatibility with the community.

In Sonoma County, the ALUC has increased the safety provisions by setting building coverage restrictions and requirements limiting the intensity of building occupancy in runway approach areas.

## **5.0 AIR TRANSPORTATION POLICIES OF THE COUNTY OF SONOMA**

Sonoma County's air transportation policies are designed to support existing air transportation services and provide for a level of growth commensurate with projected population and economic change in the County and its eight cities. There is a specific concern for compatibility of airports with adjacent community areas and for the safety of air travelers and people and property on the ground. Compatible aircraft operations is another major issue addressed by these policies.

### **5.1 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY IN THE VICINITY OF AIRPORTS**

A key issue in the provision of existing and future air transportation services is the maintenance of compatible land uses adjacent to existing airports in the County.

**GOAL AT-1:** It is the goal of the County of Sonoma to assure that land use types and densities in areas adjacent to public use airports are compatible with airport activity so existing and future capabilities of the airports can be preserved.

**Objective AT-1.1:** It is the County's objective that its land-use plans, regulations and other actions adhere, to the extent reasonable or practicable, to the land-use compatibility criteria of the Sonoma County Airport Land Use Commission, unless it is determined that an override is appropriate.

**Objective AT-1.2:** It is the County's objective that ALUC's airport noise land-use compatibility policies and criteria be the principal determinant of the compatibility and acceptability of proposed land-use projects with respect to the activities, noise, and other impacts of a nearby airport, but that any special circumstances also be taken into account in making such determinations.

**Objective AT-1.3:** The maximum noise exposure which shall be considered normally acceptable for development of new residential uses in areas surrounding a public-use airport is the 60 dB CNEL noise contour as shown in Figures AT-5 through AT-11.

**The following policies shall be utilized to accomplish the foregoing objectives:**

**AT-1a:** When a proposed project will involve a land use which is "marginally acceptable" or "normally unacceptable" within a noise environment in excess of 60 dBA CNEL, an acoustical analysis shall be required in order to show that the structure has been designed to limit intruding noise to the prescribed allowable levels. Such analysis shall be done in the manner indicated in the California Noise Insulation Standards.

**AT-1b:** When applying the noise compatibility criteria to a given location, the basis for evaluation shall be the maximum CNEL to which the location is or is forecast to be exposed. For the Sonoma County Airport, the contour based on airport capacity shown in Figure AT-5 shall be used. For the Cloverdale, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Santa Rosa Air Center, Sonoma Valley, and Sonoma Skypark airports, the ALUC forecast of future noise exposures shown in Figures AT-6 through AT-11 shall be used.

**AT-1c:** Aviation use of Santa Rosa Air Center is incompatible with existing and planned land uses in adjacent off-site areas. The County encourages closure of this airport and the termination of its aviation and related uses.

**AT-1d:** No object or structure shall be permitted to be erected which, because of height or other factors, would result in an increase in the minimum ceiling or visibility criteria for an existing or proposed instrument approach procedure.

**AT-1e:** An object or structure which would penetrate a horizontal or conical surface as defined by the ALUC, and would be 35 feet or less in height above the ground (ie. is within the height limits prescribed for most Sonoma County zoning districts) shall be considered conditionally acceptable even if it exceeds the prescribed height limit. Appropriate marking and lighting may be conditions for acceptability.

**AT-1f:** Specific Plans of the County of Sonoma shall be prepared or revised in a manner which will conform to the ALUC's Policy Plan, except where the board of Supervisors determines that special circumstances justify overruling the Commission and finds that the proposed action is consistent with the purposes expressed in Section 21670 of the Public Utilities Code (State Aeronautics Act).

**AT-1g:** The County and its various agencies shall refer proposed projects which include requests for general or specific plan amendment, changes to the zoning ordinance, and changes to local building regulations to the ALUC for determination of consistency with its policy plan prior to review by the appropriate County decision-making body.

**AT-1h:** An approach protection plan for identification of appropriate means of protecting approach zones at the Sonoma County Airport, as identified in Figure AT-12 shall be prepared by the Aviation Department. The appropriate method of protection shall be consistent with the level of protection needed based upon the impact from operations anticipated in this element. The plan shall provide for protection of the area anticipated to be impacted by the airport's ultimate capacity of 550,000 annual operations.

**AT-1i:** When allowed by law, aviation easements may be required as a condition of approval of discretionary planning permits for parcels within the ALUC referral area shown in Figure AT-12.

**AT-1j:** The county of Sonoma or other appropriate agency may acquire by negotiated purchase fee title interest or partial interests, such as conservation or aviation easements, in real property in order to protect the approach zone at the Sonoma County Airport.

**AT-1k:** Prior to initiation of commuter service to Petaluma Airport, a detailed noise study shall be conducted.

## **5.2 PROTECTION OF THE AIRSPACE**

Safety of aircraft in flight is a major concern and control of tall structures and buildings is a means of protecting aircraft operations as well as people and property on the ground.

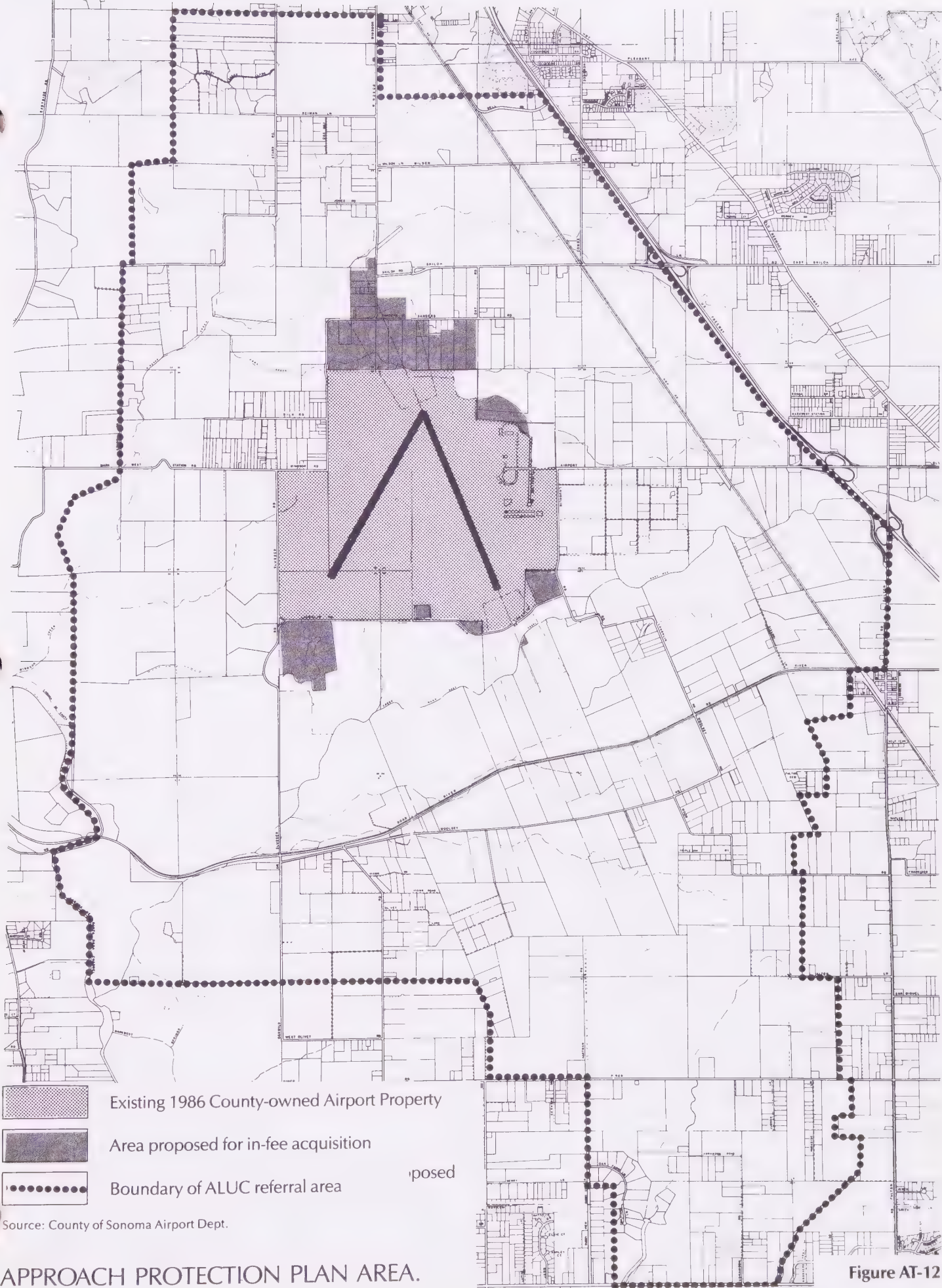
**GOAL AT-2:** It is a goal of the County of Sonoma to provide appropriate conditions which will permit the safe passage of aircraft operating to and from airports in the County.

**Objective AT-2.1:** It is the County's objective that the height and type of structures adjacent to airports be restricted or marked so they will not constitute hazards to air navigation as per FAR Part 77.

**The following policy shall be utilized to accomplish this objective:**

**AT-2a:** The County of Sonoma and its various agencies shall comply with ALUC policies regarding height, location, marking and lighting of structures, unless it's determined that an override by appropriate government body is appropriate.





APPROACH PROTECTION PLAN AREA.

Figure AT-12

### 5.3 PROTECTION OF ADJACENT COMMUNITY AREAS

Airport activity can, through changes in types of aircraft and/or increased activity, adversely impact surrounding communities. The following directives express policies regarding limitations on airport operations at the Sonoma County Airport which are intended to either prevent or otherwise mitigate these adverse effects.

**GOAL AT-3:** It is a goal of the County of Sonoma to maintain compatibility of airport operations with preservation of environmental quality in areas adjacent to Sonoma County Airport.

**Objective AT-3.1:** It is the County's objective to utilize the CNEL as the measure of cumulative noise impacts and that the boundary of the 60 dB CNEL noise contour projected for year 2005, as shown in Figure AT-13, not be extended to encompass a larger area prior to year 2005.

**Objective AT-3.2:** It is the County's objective to utilize the maximum noise level as defined in the FAR Part 36 Advisory Circular for take off as the metric for single-event noise impacts and to limit such events at the Sonoma County Airport to 83.2 dBA (Lmax) during daytime hours and to 75 dBA (Lmax) during nighttime hours. As of January 1, 1992, the limit shall be 72 dBA (Lmax) for nighttime hours. Exemptions shall be provided for aircraft operating on emergency missions, including their support functions, and for aircraft of the United States Government and its various agencies and for daytime operations by existing aircraft based at Sonoma County Airport.

**Objective AT-3.3:** It is the County's objective to move toward use of quieter new technology aircraft at Sonoma County Airport. To implement this objective, the 83.2 dBA limit established by this element is the noise level established in the FAR Part 36 Advisory Circular for the MD-80, the loudest Stage 3, new technology aircraft.

**The County shall utilize the following policies with regard to operations at the Sonoma County Airport:**

**AT-3a:** Operations at the Sonoma County Airport shall be regulated so as not to extend the land area encompassed within the 60 CNEL noise contour projected for year 2005, as shown in Figure AT-13, prior to year 2005.

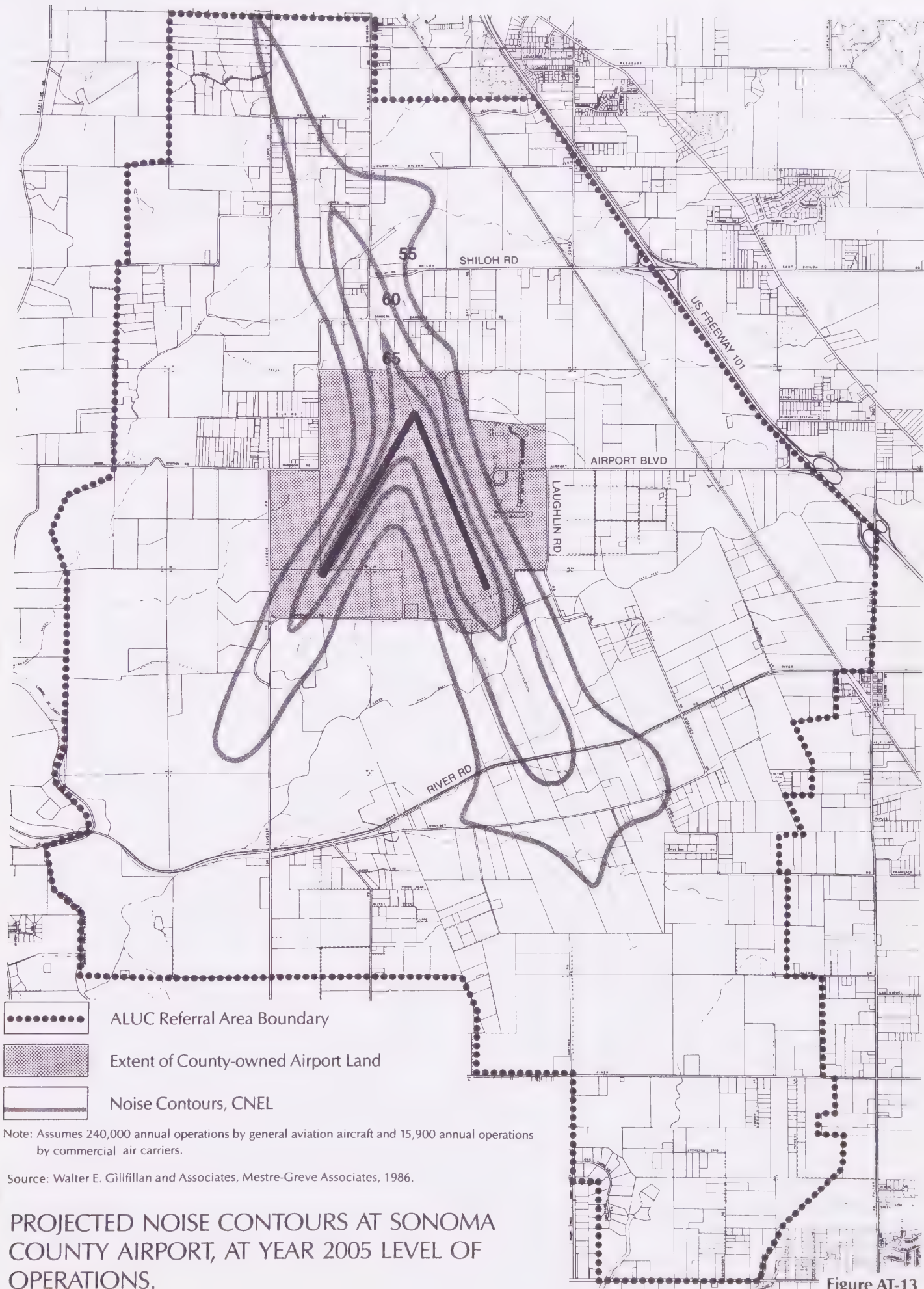
**AT-3b:** Daytime aircraft operations at Sonoma County Airport by general aviation users and by commercial air carriers shall be restricted to those types of aircraft that have a departure single-event noise level of 83.2 dBA (Lmax) or less, as specified in the most recently published FAR Part 36 Advisory Circular (AC 36-3D, take-off chart). Nighttime operations shall be similarly limited to aircraft not exceeding 75 dBA (Lmax). Daytime hours shall be defined at 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and nighttime hours as 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

The exemption for aircraft operating on emergency missions, including their support functions and for aircraft of the United States and its various agencies shall continue until this element is amended to the contrary. The exemption for existing aircraft based at Sonoma County Airport shall terminate at the conclusion of a depreciation schedule which amortizes out the economic value of the aircraft over a period of time which is calculated to take into account the useful life of the aircraft and the owner's investment in it.

**AT-3c:** After January 1, 1992, nighttime operations at Sonoma County Airport shall be restricted to those types of aircraft that have a departure single-event noise level of 72dBA (Lmax) or less, as specified in the most recently published FAR Part 36 Advisory Circular.

**AT-3d:** It is the County's intent to move towards a quieter single-event noise standard in the future as the aircraft fleet shifts to newer, quieter aircraft. The Aviation Director shall annually provide a report to the Board of Supervisors on noise complaints received at the Sonoma County Airport. If the Board determines that a noise problem exists, the County may establish a more sophisticated measure, standard and monitoring system for single noise events which shall be capable of measuring noise produced by any aircraft arriving or departing the Sonoma County Airport.





**AT-3e:** The County of Sonoma shall require that, prior to initiation or expansion at Sonoma County Airport of any regularly scheduled commercial passenger service, the applicable air carrier shall enter into an appropriate lease or operating agreement with the County. Such leases or agreements shall conform to all applicable policy directives of the Air Transportation Element, including those pertaining to restrictions on permissible aircraft noise levels. The County shall, in negotiating leases or agreements, encourage that aircraft types with quieter noise levels be utilized. To the extent allowed by law, the County shall require that new leases or other operating agreements with commercial air carriers be limited solely to quieter "Stage 3" aircraft. Prior to its execution, any proposed lease or operating agreement shall be reviewed for consistency with the Air Transportation Element and shall be reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and the implementing ordinance of the County of Sonoma to determine whether the project is exempt from CEQA, is covered by the EIR accompanying this element, or requires the adoption or certification of an additional environmental document.

**AT-3f:** A noise monitoring program shall be established for the Sonoma County Airport; monitoring shall conform to state standards and include both periodic ambient measurement of single-event noise and computer modeling of CNEL contours based on logs of aircraft operations. The noise monitoring program shall include a 24 hour directory listing and answering machine for receiving complaints. Complaints shall be recorded, investigated, and where possible correlated with aircraft operations. The Airport Director and County counsel shall submit to the Board specific options for the monitoring of noise and a summary of techniques used by other jurisdictions. Reports summarizing the findings and any recommendations for improvements of noise policies and/or standards shall be submitted to the Board of Supervisors by the Aviation Director. The first such report shall be submitted within one year of adoption of this plan and subsequent reports whenever there are significant changes in aviation activity, but at least biannually.

**AT-3g:** Standards for interior noise levels for existing residences shall be established as part of the Approach Protection Plan. The Approach Protection Plan shall identify appropriate mitigations to be undertaken in the event noise standards are exceeded. These mitigations may include purchase assurance, acoustical treatment, and purchase of easements.

#### **5.4 GENERAL AVIATION**

Continuation of existing general aviation activity and provision for future growth are an important part of air transportation in the County.

**GOAL AT-4:** The County shall encourage the maintenance of an airport system which is capable of accommodating projected growth in aviation demand.

**Objective AT-4.1:** It is the County's objective to maintain the functions and level of service at Sonoma County Airport to accommodate the projections of aviation activity shown in Table AT-3.

**Objective AT-4.2:** It is the County's objective to provide adequate runway, taxiway, aircraft parking, aircraft storage and attendant facilities to meet demand projected at Sonoma County Airport.

**Objective AT-4.3:** The County may accommodate general aviation activity at private restricted-use airports when compatible with surrounding land uses.

**The County shall utilize the following policies to achieve the objectives noted above:**

**AT-4a:** The County shall revise, update and maintain a current airport master plan for Sonoma County Airport which conforms to the policy direction established in the Air Transportation Element.

**AT-4b:** The Airport Department shall limit proposed projects to those consistent with the policy directives of this element, including construction of permanent facilities and land acquisition.



**AT-4c:** The airport capital improvement program and budget shall be prepared and administered in a manner which is consistent with the directives of the Air Transportation Element.

**AT-4d:** Any airport projects shall be required to be justified based on the need resulting from projected aviation activity or current use levels.

## 5.5 COMMERCIAL AIR PASSENGER SERVICES

Commercial air passenger services are defined to consist of two components, commuter airlines and scheduled airline services. These services are contemplated to be provided exclusively at the Sonoma County Airport and to reach total annual passenger levels of 573,000 by year 2005.

Commuter airlines provide Sonoma County passengers with convenient connections to major airline service points in the Bay Area. This service is an important component in accommodating the future demand for air travel to and from the county, and provides a time-saving alternative to utilization of ground transportation along the Highway 101 corridor to San Francisco International Airport. Annual passenger levels are projected to reach 50,000 by 2005.

Scheduled airline service would consist of passenger service to one or more of the major air passenger markets outside the Bay Area. The most likely points for such service are located in Southern California. Passenger levels are projected to reach 523,000 by 2005.

**GOAL AT-5:** It is a goal of the County of Sonoma to encourage establishment and maintenance of commuter and scheduled airline services at the Sonoma County Airport and to provide for the production of adequate airport facilities to serve passengers in a manner which is safe, efficient, and compatible with the surrounding community.

**Objective AT-5.1:** It is the County's objective to provide commercial air services including commuter and scheduled aircraft at the Sonoma County Airport not to exceed 573,000 annual passengers or 15,200 annual operations by 2005.

**Objective AT-5.2:** It is the County's objective to provide a balance of commercial air carrier services at Sonoma County Airport not to exceed a total of 21 departures per day. Scheduled carriers shall utilize no more than 14 of the 21 available departure slots. Commuter carriers shall utilize no more than 13 of the available departure slots. The eight departure slots allocated exclusively to scheduled carriers shall be reserved for scheduled carriers utilizing aircraft having a passenger capacity of at least 50 seats, but may be used by scheduled carriers utilizing aircraft with a passenger capacity of less than 50 seats so long as the use of such aircraft is required by market conditions and the use is revocable and the departure slots reallocable if market conditions change so as to support the larger aircraft.

**Objective AT-5.3:** It is the County's objective that when the above commercial air passenger services reach 650 enplaned passengers per day averaged over a one year period (474,500 annual passengers), a review by the Board of Supervisors shall occur prior to any increase in annual passenger or operations levels. The review anticipated by this section and policy AT-5e is not intended to require an amendment to the Air Transportation Element nor is it intended to require review of this element in its entirety; rather it is intended to trigger Board consideration of the impacts and infrastructure of the Sonoma County Airport as it relates to its immediate environs.

**Objective AT-5.4:** It is the County's objective to plan terminal, access, parking, other passenger service facilities and airport facilities consistent with the levels of service in Objective AT-5.1.

**Objective AT-5.5:** It is the County's objective to provide airport facilities which would allow appropriate separation of dissimilar air traffic to allow for the safe operation of general aviation, commuter airlines and scheduled airlines at the Sonoma County Airport.

The County shall utilize the following policies to achieve the objectives noted above:

**AT-5a:** The Aviation Department shall revise, update and maintain the Sonoma County Airport Master Plan to accommodate 15,200 annual operations by commuter and scheduled airlines by 2005. The master plan shall provide for commercial air carrier services not to exceed a total of 21 departures per day. Scheduled air carrier services shall use no more than 14 of the 21 available departure slots. Commuter carriers shall use no more than 13 of the available departure slots. The 8 departure slots allocated exclusively to scheduled carriers shall be reserved for scheduled carriers utilizing aircraft having a passenger capacity of at least 50 seats, but may be used by scheduled carriers utilizing aircraft with a passenger capacity of less than 50 seats so long as the use of such aircraft is required by market conditions and such use is revocable and the departure slots reallocable if market conditions change so as to support the larger aircraft.

**AT-5b:** Runway length at the Sonoma County Airport for the existing and any new runway which may be constructed shall be limited to no longer than the present length of approximately 5,000 feet. Existing runways will not be substantially strengthened except as needed to perform necessary or routine maintenance. Operations by commercial air carriers shall be limited to those aircraft types that may safely and efficiently operate within this facility constraint and which do not exceed an operating weight of 95,000 pounds.

**AT-5c:** Any air carrier initiating or expanding commuter or scheduled airline passenger service or commercial freight service at the Sonoma county Airport shall be required to enter into a license, lease, or operating agreement with the County of Sonoma. Licenses, leases and operating agreements shall implement and be required to conform to the policy directives of the general plan. Licenses, leases and operation agreements shall include provisions for slot reallocation.

**AT-5d:** Any proposed improvement projects to accommodate air passenger services shall be consistent with the year 2005 projections of 15,200 annual operations and 573,000 annual passengers.

**AT-5e:** A review by the Board of Supervisors shall occur at such a time that the "review threshold" of 650 enplaned passengers per day averaged over a one year period (474,500 annual passengers) is reached. The review anticipated by this section is not intended to require an amendment to the Air Transportation Element nor is it intended to require review of this element in its entirety; rather it is intended to trigger Board consideration of the impacts and infrastructure of the Sonoma County Airport as it relates to its immediate environs.

## **5.6 NON-AVIATION AND ACCESSORY USES AT SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT**

In addition to the facilities at the Sonoma county Airport that are required to serve aviation activities directly, the County leases other airport property for non-aviation accessory activities or uses that benefit from an airport location. These leases are an important source of the airport revenue.

**GOAL AT-6:** It is the goal of the County of Sonoma to utilize airport properties not needed for aviation activity to enhance airport revenues and operations and to do so in a manner compatible with adjacent community areas.

**Objective AT-6.I:** It is the County's objective that the lands shown on the revised Airport Master Plan as non-aviation lands be used in an economic manner.

The County shall utilize the following policies pertaining to accessory uses and non-aviation facilities at Sonoma County Airport:

**AT-6a:** The Aviation Department shall revise, update and maintain the Airport Master Plan consistent with this element to indicate those land areas which may be used for non-aviation purposes.



**AT-6b:** Permissible non-aviation and accessory uses on county-owned lands include commercial and industrial uses, except that transient lodging and similar uses shall not be allowed.

**AT-6c:** Lands designated or acquired for approach protection purposes shall not be utilized for commercial or industrial purposes and shall not be extensively developed with structures of any type.

**AT-6d:** Appropriate uses of lands designated an/or acquired for approach protection include agriculture, outdoor recreation, and similar low-intensity uses, including spray irrigation with treated effluent, provided that such uses do not result in a significant increase in bird populations at a level which would give rise to a safety problem.

## **6.0 AIR TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM: 1987-1992**

A number of separate actions will be required to implement the Air Transportation Element following its adoption. These actions involve short-

term and medium-term programs that, when completed, will assure the achievement of the objectives expressed in this element. With the exception of the program to prepare standard language for incorporation into leases or operating agreements with airlines, completion of the programs identified is not a pre-condition for expansion of commercial air passenger services or of airport facilities.

### **Program 1: SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT MASTER PLAN**

The Airport Department will be responsible for updating the Sonoma County Airport Master Plan to be consistent with this element. This should be done in the short-term. Airport operations and projects consistent with this element and, unless exempt from CEQA, accompanied by appropriate environmental documentation may occur prior to adoption of the Master Plan. The specific areas requiring review and update are as follows:

- The demand/capacity analysis particularly with respect to the separation of dissimilar traffic.
- Facility requirements (size and location) to accommodate passenger services and aircraft for commuter and scheduled airline service.
- An Airport Layout Plan (ALP) depicting aviation and non-aviation land and location requirements.
- Review and update of the more detailed on-Airport Land Use Plan.
- A Financial Plan to assure economic feasibility under the enterprise account program.
- A study of infrastructure and service needs, including sewer, water, roads, and drainage.
- Implementation of the Burke's Goldfields preservation program.

The draft revisions to the Airport Master Plan shall be submitted for review and adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

### **Program 2: APPROACH PROTECTION PLAN**

The Airport Department will be responsible for review and revision of the Draft Approach Protection Plan to assure that the policies of the Air Transportation Element are reflected. The impact, approach protection methods and recommendations sections will need to be reviewed for consistency with the Air Transportation Element. The plan shall provide for historical or archaeological assessments and resulting site mitigation where appropriate prior to demolition of any structure or construction of permanent airport facilities.

### **Program 3: STANDARD AIRLINE LEASE AND OPERATING AGREEMENT**

The Airport Department, in association with County Counsel, shall be responsible for preparing a standard section or sections for incorporating into all leases or operating agreements with air carriers proposing to utilize the Sonoma County Airport for new or expanded commercial passenger or freight service. These standard sections shall include language which expresses the conditions and limitations upon such services as have been determined to be appropriate in the policy directives of the Air Transportation Element.

**Program 4: AMENDMENTS TO THE AIRPORT LAND USE POLICY PLAN**

The ALUC would be responsible for reviewing its Policy Plan in light of the Air Transportation Element, Master Plan, and Noise Monitoring Program. The Planning Agency staff would provide staff support for this effort. Funding would come from the Agency budget and the work would be done in the short-term. The specific area requiring review would be:

- A maximum interior single-event level
- Air Transportation Element compliance with the ALUC Land Use Plan.

**Program 5: NOISE MONITORING PROGRAM AT SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT**

The Airport Department will be responsible for developing and implementing a noise monitoring program that complies with state guidelines. The program shall include both monitoring of ambient single-event noise levels and computer modeling of CNEL contours based upon logs of aircraft operations. The Airport Director and County Counsel will also submit for the Board's consideration options for monitoring of noise and a summary of techniques used by other jurisdictions.









**PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California 95403**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The Public Facilities and Services Element addresses seven types of public services most directly related to the physical development of the county. These include water, wastewater management, public education, parks and recreation, fire protection, solid waste management, and utilities.

This element's purpose is to assess the current status of these services in terms of system capacity and demand and to evaluate future capacity in relation to projected growth. Tables 3-3.16, 3-3.18 through 3-3.26, and 5-8 through 5-16 of the General Plan EIR present detailed information on the current status of and future demands for most services. This element is further intended to reduce uncertainty about service availability and cost and to integrate public service concerns into land use decision making. The element is designed to assure that public services are available when needed.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Land Use and Housing Elements contain the economic and population projections which are the basis for the assessment of public service needs. Highway and public transportation needs are included in the Circulation and Transit Element. Aviation facility needs are contained in the Air Transportation Element. The Public Safety Element addresses some wildland fire protection services.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

This element describes the current status of the public services in terms of service capacity and demand in relation to projected growth. With the exception of wastewater management services, the evaluations are made by planning area. The Element is divided into three sections, two which describe public services and an implementation program.

## **2.0 WATER AND SEWER SERVICES**

### **2.1 WATER SERVICES**

An adequate water supply is essential if Sonoma County is to sustain economic growth and serve projected increases in employment and population. The main purpose of this section is to address water supply services provided by government agencies. Small, privately owned systems are also discussed because the county is often asked to take over failing systems.

Five agencies regulate water supply, distribution and quality in Sonoma County. The California Water Resources Control Board (WRCB) issues permits for the use of surface water. Two Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) enforce federal and state water quality standards for surface waters and groundwater. The California Department of Health Services (DOHS) approves, inspects and enforces federal and state water quality standards for water systems with 200 or more service connections.

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulates privately owned water companies. The Sonoma County Department of Public Health (DPH) approves, inspect and enforces federal and state water quality standards for water systems with 5-199 service connections.

**LARGE WATER SYSTEMS.** Large water systems (200+ service connections) serve six of the county's cities as well as the larger unincorporated communities. Their main source of water is the Russian River water system, operated by the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA). Most systems also have supplemental sources. As of 1986, the only large systems with significant supply, quality or operational problems were those serving Penngrove, Camp Meeker and Guerneville. Table 3-3.16 of the General Plan EIR summarizes information on these systems.

The Russian River water system stores runoff from rainfall in the Eel and Russian River watersheds in the Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma reservoirs. The Russian River serves as the first stage of the transmission system. Releases from the reservoirs into the river system are diverted for delivery through pumps and aqueducts. SWRCB permits control the amount of water which must remain in the basin for riparian habitats, agriculture and recreation.

Annual water diversions increased from 31,300 acre feet in 1980 to over 43,400 acre feet in 1985. As a result, the SCWA in 1986 requested and obtained an additional water allocation from the WRCB (Decision 1610). The WRCB found that the allocation of 75,000 acre feet was adequate to serve projected growth within the SCWA's service area through 2005. However, the following concerns remain:

- (1) urban population projections for 2005 cited in Decision 1610 are about 7,000 persons less than those in this plan.
- (2) Average annual rainfall rates were used in modeling future supply/demand, raising the concern that drought conditions could require some curtailment of domestic and agricultural water use in areas north of the Dry Creek/Russian River confluence.
- (3) SCWA analyses of 1980-87 water use trends show that use is growing at a faster rate than population growth.

Although the SWCA has indicated that the maximum sustained yield of the Lake Sonoma reservoir (about 110,000 acre feet per year) is adequate to serve projected growth through 2010, there is a need for better coordination of water demand and growth projections of the county and the cities served by the SCWA. Planning for greater use of groundwater should begin as soon as possible, in anticipation of post-2010 water needs.

These factors have implications for the SCWA's distribution system. With one exception, the completed system will have sufficient capacity to deliver its allocated 75,000 acre feet per year to its customers. Construction of a second aqueduct to serve the Sonoma Valley is under study. However, should the SCWA need to deliver more water, other distribution systems would need to be reviewed and possibly expanded. Long range facility needs of the SCWA are addressed in the agency's "Water Transmission Capital Expenditure Program."

**SMALL WATER SYSTEMS.** Small systems (199 or fewer connections) supply water to a wide variety of uses such as rural businesses, residences and schools, mobile home parks and small unincorporated communities. Most are owned by private companies or mutual companies. A few are owned by special districts. These systems have small revenue bases and relatively high per capita costs. They frequently are unable to finance major capital investments needed to replace aging facilities or accommodate growth. All but one of the forty small systems subject to moratoria on new service connections in 1984 were under private or mutual ownership. Table 3-3.15 of the General Plan EIR provides summary data on existing small water systems.

Most existing small water systems are not designed to accommodate substantial growth. Issues are how water supply, quality, and distribution problems can be resolved and how new small systems can avoid such problems. Planning for improvements occurs on a case-by-case basis as deficiencies in existing systems are discovered.

## **2.2 SEWER SERVICES**

Untreated or improperly treated wastewater contains bacteria, viruses, chemicals and nutrients that can cause human diseases, kill or injure plants, animals and fish, and produce surface waters that are discolored or odorous. Since all wastewater is eventually returned to the environment, the public has a vital interest in assuring proper wastewater management.

Two agencies regulate wastewater systems. The Regional Water Quality Control Boards enforce clean water standards, issue permits for wastewater facilities, and develop and enforce wastewater discharge requirements. The DOHS provides technical assistance to RWQCBs in developing wastewater facilities and waste discharge requirements. Wastewater management services are provided by various types of agencies, including county service areas (CSAs), county sanitation districts (CSDs), municipal agencies, and independent sewer districts.



The estimates of future wastewater flows indicate only the approximate scale of needed improvements. Precise facility needs can vary considerably and are best addressed by detailed master facility plans.

Historically, federal and state Clean Water Act funds have been used to pay for the major share of the cost of treatment facilities. Since future funds are likely to be less available, local funding sources such as sewer connection fees will be needed.

**Goal PF-1:** Assure that water supply and wastewater management facilities are adequate to meet projected needs and are provided in a manner that preserves riparian habitats, supports water dependent resources, enhances recreational opportunities, and preserves and enhances water quality and the environment.

**Objective PF-1.1:** Plan for healthful water supplies and wastewater facilities adequate to serve the growth projected in the general plan.

**Objective PF-1.2:** Operate County water and wastewater facilities in compliance with applicable state and federal standards.

**Objective PF-1.3:** Help resolve water problems resulting from proliferation of small water systems.

**Objective PF-1.4:** Manage groundwater resources in order to avoid withdrawals which exceed the replenishment of affected groundwater basins.

**The following policies, in addition to those in the Resource Conservation Element, shall be used to achieve these objectives:**

**PF-1a:** Plan, design and construct sewer and water services in accordance with projected growth except as provided in policy LU-4d on page 35.

**PF-1b:** Prepare or encourage the preparation of master facilities plans for all water supply and wastewater management systems. Design and construct all facilities in accordance with the general plans of applicable jurisdictions. In the event that a master plan or subsequent monitoring fails to show adequate facilities or supplies for planned growth, consider moratoria on plan amendments, zoning changes, building permits, or other entitlements in order to protect services to existing residents. The minimum contents necessary for an adequate master plan are:

- 1) maps showing service area boundaries,
- 2) a forecast of growth,
- 3) projected service and facility needs ,
- 4) estimated costs of and revenues for needed improvements,
- 5) system design parameters and assumptions.

**PF-1c:** Require as part of discretionary project applications within a water or sewer service area written certification that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to occupancy.

**PF-1d:** Avoid extension of sewer or water service outside of a sphere of influence or urban service area. Consider exceptions to this policy only:

- 1) where necessary to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development, or
- 2) where a substantial overriding public benefit authorized by policy OS-1c or OS-2c on pages 178 and 181 would result, unless LAFCO has adopted a "no annexation" policy.
- 3) Water service only may be approved for a property which is located within a water district boundary in existence as of March 1989.

**PF-1e:** Use the following guidelines for any exception allowed by PF-1d:

- 1) the property must adjoin the urban service boundary, and where water service is requested, the property must be located within a water district boundary in existence as of March 1989.
- 2) size facilities to serve development consistent with the general plan,
- 3) include written certification that service capacity is available,
- 4) give preference to out of service area agreements rather than annexations,
- 5) require dedications of scenic easements to the extent allowed by law,
- 6) ensure that any offered term of easement is coterminus with the duration of service.

**PF-1f:** Use water effectively and reduce water and wastewater system demand by:

- 1) requiring water conserving design and equipment in new construction,
- 2) encouraging water conserving landscaping and other conservation measures.
- 3) encouraging retrofitting with water conserving devices,
- 4) designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration to the extent economically feasible.

**PF-1g:** Initiate a review of any water or sewer systems when they persistently fail to meet applicable standards. If necessary to assure that standards are met, the County may deny new development proposals or impose moratoria on building and other permits that would result in a substantial increase in demand and may impose strict monitoring requirements.

**PF-1h:** When considering formation of new water service agencies, favor systems owned and operated by a governmental entity over privately or mutually owned systems. Continue to authorize new privately or mutually owned systems only if system revenues and water supplies are adequate to serve existing and projected growth for the life of the system. Ensure this through agreements or other mechanisms setting aside funds for long term capital improvements and operation and maintenance costs.

**PF-1i:** Consider approval of new wastewater management systems in unincorporated areas only when it is necessary to resolve an existing public health hazard. Avoid new small wastewater treatment systems which serve multiple uses under separate ownership on separate parcels.

**PF-1j:** Monitor groundwater usage in order to prevent overdrafting of groundwater supplies.

**PF-1k:** Encourage pretreatment of commercial and industrial wastes prior to their connection to sewer systems.

### **3.0 OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES**

#### **3.1 PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES**

Outdoor recreation contributes to the tourism economy, enhances the quality of life for county residents and visitors, and conserves unique natural and cultural resources. The various types of parklands found in Sonoma County are classified based upon the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) category recommendations. Federal Recreation Areas and State Parks provide recreation opportunities intended to serve national or statewide populations. Regional parks provide opportunities for a broad range of recreational activities generally within a 30-60 minute drive from urban areas at a rate of 20 acres per 1,000 persons. Community parks are large enough to accommodate a variety of activities within a 30 minute drive of population centers at a rate of 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons. Neighborhood parks are smaller, multi-use facilities within one half mile of the population serviced. The standard is 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons.

Tables 3-3.18 through 3-3.26 and 5.8 through 5.16 of the General Plan EIR present detailed data on park and recreation services. Potential future state acquisitions total 1,600 acres. Proposed additions to the county regional park system (5,923 acres), would result in a ratio of about 19 acres per 1,000 population in 2005. The ratio is substantially higher when region serving state parks are included. Up to 290 acres of community and



neighborhood parks are proposed, which would result in a ration of 5.7 acres per 1,000 population in unincorporated areas by year 2005.

### **3.2 PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES**

Sonoma County has 41 school districts whose attendance areas are wholly contained within the county, and five districts which provide facilities outside of the county. Each district has its own revenue base, elected board, and administration. The Sonoma County Office of Education provides some administrative and business services to all districts.

As the county's population increases, the number of school age children also grows. During the 1970's, the rate of expansion of the school age population was slower than expected. In recent years, the rate has increased slightly. Countywide, the number of school age children is expected to increase by about 19,400 students between 1985 and 2005. The proportion attending private schools or being home educated is assumed to remain stable.

To assist in estimating the need for new school facilities, each school district provided an ideal average class size. Based upon these averages the countywide estimated need for new classrooms is 428 by 2005.

A major issue in planning for new facilities is the need for increased coordination between land use and facilities planning. Districts must be aware of the projected residential growth within their service area so that new school needs can be accurately forecast.

An important source of financing for new school facilities is the "school impact" fee on new residential construction. State law now authorizes local school districts to charge development fees for permanent facilities. However, funding will likely continue to be dependent on state sources. California law also enables a county to acquire new school sites by dedication as a condition of subdivision approval.

Existing school facilities and district owned vacant sites are shown on the land use plan maps. General locations are shown for new sites when there is a known need in an area.

### **3.3 FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES**

Fire protection, emergency medical and rescue services are essential to the protection of life and property in Sonoma County. They are provided by four types of agencies. Eighteen fire protection districts provide services with revenues from property taxes. Nineteen volunteer companies provide local services in rural communities. Two County service areas (CSA) and a community services district (CSD) rely primarily upon volunteer staffs. The County contracts with various municipal and district fire agencies to provide backup services to volunteer companies. The County has established a Department of Fire Services to coordinate the 52 service agencies in the County. Tables 3-3.18 through 3-3.26 of the General Plan EIR include information on fire services.

Fire suppression services are highly dependent on paid call, part time and volunteer personnel. Although this dependency remains, the number of volunteer fire fighters has fallen off in recent years. While the county generally has been receiving acceptable levels of service, problems have resulted from the condition of existing equipment and matching the type of equipment and staff training to the type of fire.

Demand for increased fire suppression and emergency medical services will not be generated by housing, population or job growth alone. Increases in tourism, increases in level of service expectations, and changes in the population mix will also affect demand.

The Department of Fire Services (DFS) projects that the most pressing and costly needs involve manpower. It anticipates a shift from volunteer supported services to an even greater reliance on paid personnel. This shift will be accompanied by a trend from volunteer companies to formation of special districts.

The primary tasks with regard to fire services planning are to ensure that needed organizational changes occur in a timely and cost effective manner and to secure adequate revenue sources. Emergency medical services should also be evaluated, since growth in medical calls over the first half of the decade has consistently outpaced fire related emergencies.

### **3.4 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

State law requires cities and/or counties to prepare a Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) to identify and reserve sites for solid waste facilities, and ensure that land uses adjacent to or near solid waste facilities are compatible with those facilities. Sonoma County, in cooperation with the cities in the county, prepared and adopted a county SWMP which was most recently revised in 1985.

The County SWMP is the principal planning document for solid waste management in the county. Solid waste management facilities located in unincorporated areas, including landfills and transfer stations, are designated in the Land Use Element. Issues pertaining to solid waste management include:

- 1) the need to expand or replace the Central landfill which is expected to reach capacity by 1994.
- 2) the need to accommodate the sludge disposal needs of wastewater treatment facilities serving both cities and unincorporated areas. Maximum disposal needs from all wastewater facilities are estimated at 45,000 cubic yards per year.
- 3) reduction of the quantity of waste deposited in landfills through additional emphasis on recycling.

The County SWMP contains goals, policies, and short, medium, and long range objectives, together with measures designed to guide solid waste management and disposal actions of the county and other applicable agencies. The public facilities element is intended to complement the adopted policies of the County SWMP.

### **3.5 PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Certain public utilities, such as electricity, natural gas and telephone services, require transmission and maintenance facilities that may affect natural and scenic resources or neighborhood character.

The Land Use Element designates existing public utility facilities as Public/Quasi-Public land uses. The purpose of this element is to establish policies for the designation of needed new facilities and provide for the review of proposed facilities.

**Goal PF-2:** Assure that park and recreation, public education, fire suppression and emergency medical, and solid waste services, and public utility sites are available to the meet future needs of Sonoma County residents.

**Objective PF-2.1:** Provide an adequate supply and equitable geographic distribution of regional and local parks and recreation services, based on population projections.

**Objective PF-2.2:** Use the National Recreation and Parks Administration (NRPA) standards as the minimum standards for determining park needs.

**Objective PF-2.3:** Assist school districts in developing more precise estimates of population growth within their attendance areas.

**Objective PF-2.4:** Use estimates by school districts of new school site needs as the basis for applying school site designations on land use plan maps.

**Objective PF-2.5:** Promote cooperation among fire and emergency service agencies in the area of public education and awareness, especially in those areas isolated from emergency service providers either by distance or topography.



**Objective PF-2.6:** Integrate fire protection systems into new structures as a means of improving fire protection services through adoption of a county ordinance.

**Objective PF-2.7:** Encourage more effective use of existing fire protection services by emphasizing an integrated countywide response system.

**Objective PF-2.8:** Continue to coordinate fire protection services and planning with all other related agencies.

**Objective PF-2.9:** Use the County Solid Waste Management Plan as the policy document for solid waste management in the county.

**Objective PF-2.10:** Locate and design public utility transmission, distribution, and maintenance facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and scenic resources.

**The following policies, in addition to those of the Open Space Element, shall be used to carry out the above objectives:**

**PF-2a:** Plan, design, and construct park and recreation, fire and emergency medical, public education, and solid waste services and public utilities in accordance with projected growth, except as provided in policy LU-4d on page 35.

**PF-2b:** Work with the cities to provide park and recreation, public education, fire and emergency medical, and solid waste services, and public utilities. Use proposed annexations, redevelopment agreements, revenue sharing agreements, and the CEQA process as tools to ensure that incorporated development pay its fair share toward provision of these services.

**PF-2c:** Use the following standards for determination of park needs. Twenty acres of regional parks per 1,000 residents county wide and five acres of local and community parks per 1,000 residents in unincorporated areas. A portion of state parklands may be included to meet the standard for regional parks.

**PF-2d:** Provide community parks as needed in urban unincorporated areas until the area incorporates, is annexed, or another service-providing entity is established.

**PF-2e:** In the event that a proposed park or school site is designated on the land use or open space map, consider the designation as an applying to a general area rather than a particular parcel. Unless and until a particular site is acquired for public use development authorized by the land use plan may be approved.

**PF-2f:** Require dedication of land or in-lieu fees as a means of funding park and fire services and facilities.

**PF-2g:** Consider establishing a land acquisition reserve fund to purchase park or recreation lands in areas lacking adequate park facilities.

**PF-2h:** Consider user fees in County park areas where special facilities are available. Offer discounts to county residents.

**PF-2i:** Where there is an unmet need for local park facilities, encourage the formation of county service areas or other special districts to meet the need, if economically feasible.

**PF-2j:** Assist school districts in estimating the amount, rate and location of projected population growth within their attendance areas.

**PF-2k:** If a school district has established a need for interim facilities or obtaining sites for new schools, consider adopting an ordinance requiring the reservation or dedication of land, the payment of fees, or both, as a condition of approval of discretionary projects within that district as allowed by state law.

**PF-2l:** Coordinate issuance of building permits for new development within a school district which has adopted an ordinance pursuant to Government Code Section 65974.

**PF-2m:** Prepare a Fire Services Master Plan for urban and rural areas in cooperation with the cities, state, and other fire service agencies. The minimum contents necessary for an adequate master plan are:

- 1) a statement of objectives, policies and programs,
- 2) a forecast of growth,
- 3) projected fire and emergency medical service needs,
- 4) a level of service assessment.

**PF-2n:** Require prior to discretionary project approval written certification that fire and related services customarily provided to comparable uses are available or will be available prior to occupancy for projects within the service area of an applicable fire agency.

**PF-2o:** The Department of Fire Service shall review and comment on any proposed changes in the boundaries of areas of state and local responsibility for wildland fire protection and the service boundaries of local fire districts and volunteer companies.

**PF-2p:** Review projects on or near designated solid waste facilities sites for compatibility with such facilities.

**PF-2q:** Encourage application of sludge generated in Sonoma County to agricultural lands in the County. Consider sludge application projects as designated in the Land Use Element of the General Plan for purposes of compliance with Section 66796.41 of the Government Code if they meet all of the following criteria. In the event that one or more of the criteria are not met, a general plan amendment shall be required.

- 1) The project's primary purpose is to enhance agricultural use. The rate of sludge application shall be designed to enhance existing agricultural operations or designed in conjunction with a detailed management plan for proposed agricultural use.
- 2) The rate of sludge application shall not result in any future limitations on the potential agricultural use of the area of application.
- 3) The project shall be subject to the approval of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- 4) A use permit and, if necessary, a solid waste facility permit, shall be obtained.
- 5) A permit shall be obtained from the local solid waste enforcement agency (Public Health Department).
- 6) The project and any permits approved for the project shall specifically provide that waste disposal is limited solely to the approved Sonoma County sludge source.
- 7) The project shall include provisions for periodic review and evaluations of long term impacts on soils, water, and agricultural production.

**PF-2r:** In the event that sludge generated within the County is inadequate to address the agricultural demand for sludge, the County may consider general plan amendments for application of sludge generated outside of the County provided that all of the criteria set forth in policy PF-2q are met (disregarding "Sonoma County" in criterion #6) and that:

- a) The applicant can satisfy local public health officials that the method of production and content of the sludge will not be detrimental to public health.
- b) The applicant demonstrates that traffic and other impacts of the proposed project are no greater than impacts associated with sludge generated within the County.
- c) The applicant demonstrates that there are no alternative sources of sludge within the County.

**PF-2s:** Public utility facilities other than transmission line corridors may be designated as "Public/Quasi-Public" on the land use map. Allow consideration of minor facilities in any land use category where they are compatible with neighborhood character and preservation of natural and scenic resources.

**PF-2t:** Review proposals for new transmission lines or acquisition of easements for new transmission lines for consistency with general plan policies. Request wherever feasible that such facilities not be located



within areas designated as community separators or biotic resource areas. Give priority to use of existing utility corridors over new corridors.

**PF-2u:** Review proposals for new radio, telephone or other communication and transmission towers for consistency with general plan policies. Prepare siting and design guidelines for such facilities. Until these guidelines are adopted, require that proposals for new tower sites:

- a) serve a demonstrated public need,
- b) include a statement explaining why use of existing tower facilities is infeasible,
- c) minimize, to the extent feasible, impacts on biotic and scenic resources, and
- d) include an analysis of alternative sites, explaining why the proposed site results in fewer or less severe environmental effects than feasible alternative sites.

**PF-2v:** Consider requiring the undergrounding of new electrical transmission and distribution lines where appropriate in designated open space areas and in selected urban areas. Where feasible and under the Public Utility Commission (PUC) rules, convert existing overhead lines to underground facilities in urban areas.

**PF-2w:** Encourage consolidation of multiple utility lines into common utility corridors wherever practicable.

**PF-2x:** Utilize development fees to require that new development pay for its share of needed infrastructure as identified in existing and future Capital Improvement Plans prepared by the county.

#### **4.0 PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

##### **Public Services Program 1: Public Facility Master Plans.**

**Program Description:** Prepare and submit for adoption master facilities plans for the Sonoma County Water Agency and all county wastewater management districts.

##### **Public Services Program 2: Capital Improvements Program.**

**Program Description:** Prepare and maintain annually updated five year plans and budget for facility improvements for the Sonoma County Water Agency and all county wastewater management districts, parks and other facilities.

##### **Public Services Program 3: School Facility Planning Program.**

**Program Description:** Provide maps, data and technical assistance, as resources permit, to school districts to assist in estimating the amount, rate and locations of projected population growth.

##### **Public Services Program 4: Ordinances authorizing development fees and/or dedication of land for public facilities.**

**Program Description:** Prepare ordinances enabling the county to require the payment of fees and/or the dedication of lands for public facilities as a condition of approval for development projects.

##### **Public Services Program 5: Fire Service Master Plan.**

**Program Description:** Prepare a fire services master plan.

##### **Public Services Program 6: Radio Transmission Tower Siting and Design Criteria.**

**Program Description:** Prepare specific criteria for the siting and design of radio, telephone or other communication or transmission towers for inclusion in the county's Design Review Manual.











**NOISE ELEMENT**

**Sonoma County Planning Department  
575 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, California 95403**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The Noise Element is intended to provide ways to reduce existing and future noise conflicts. It includes policies and measures to achieve noise compatibility between land uses.

In accordance with State Law and guidelines, the Element identifies noise sources and areas containing noise sensitive land uses. It quantifies noise levels using noise exposure contours for current and projected conditions within the county. Levels are measured as Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or the Day-Night Average Level (Ldn), which are measurements of total noise exposure at a given location for an average day. This noise exposure information serves as a basis for achieving land use compatibility within each community and provides baseline levels and noise source identification for use in a noise control ordinance.

### **1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Noise Element is closely related to the Land Use, Circulation and Transit, and Air Transportation Elements of the general plan. The Land Use Element attempts to avoid noise incompatible land uses. The Circulation and Transit Element is linked to this element in that traffic patterns affect community noise exposure. The Air Transportation Element addresses air transportation services in the county and assesses airport noise exposure and land use compatibility criteria. The part of the Air Transportation Element addressing noise from aircraft and airport operations is incorporated by reference as part of the Noise Element.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

The Noise Element is organized into three major sections: 1) An overview of noise effects, sources, methods of analysis and the existing and projected noise environment, 2) noise control issues and policies, and 3) an implementation program.

The following noise sources are considered:

1. Highway and freeways
2. Primary arterials and major local streets
3. Railroad operations
4. Aircraft and airport operations
5. Local industrial facilities
6. Recreational, entertainment and special events
7. Other stationary sources

Noise-sensitive areas include the following land uses:

1. Residences
2. Schools
3. Hospitals
4. Rest homes
5. Long term medical or mental care facilities
6. Other uses deemed noise sensitive by the local jurisdiction

A Technical Reference Report, on file in the Planning Department, describes the effects of noise on people and techniques for noise control. It also includes data from the community noise survey and highway noise evaluation.

## **2.0 EXISTING AND FUTURE NOISE ENVIRONMENT**

### **2.1 OVERVIEW OF NOISE IN SONOMA COUNTY**

### 2.1.1 Noise and its Effects on People

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Existing noise descriptors are the result of many years of trying to quantify subjective reactions. Loudness is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency. "Weighting" these factors can help to accurately measure actual human response to noise. The "A-weighted" filter developed by the Environmental Protection Agency has become the standard tool of environmental noise assessment.

Noise has often been cited as a health problem because it inhibits general well being and contributes to undue stress and annoyance. Noise interferes with sleep, speech, recreation, and tasks demanding concentration or coordination. The result is an increase in public annoyance with the noise source and a decrease in environmental quality.

In very quiet environments, virtually any change in local activities will cause an increase in noise levels and a loss of "peace and quiet". Such increases may be considered significant by residents in these areas, even if the measured increase is small.

Table NE-1 shows the expected public reaction to change in noise levels. Because reaction may differ in very quiet environments, Table NE-1 is only a general indicator of the relationship between changes in noise and subjective reaction.

**Table NE-1 Subjective Reaction to Changes in Noise Levels of Similar Sources**

Change in Level, dBA	Factor Change in Subjective Reaction	Acoustical Energy
1	Minimum Detectable Change (Laboratory)	1.26
3	Usually Noticeable Change	2.0
5	Definitely Noticeable Change	3.2
10	Twice (or half) as Loud as Before	10.0

Sources: Various, reported by Brown-Buntin Associates

Note: All noise levels in this element are expressed in decibels. The term "dBA" means the decibel level as measured through the "A-weighted" noise filter developed by EPA. Additional information regarding noise measurement, statistical descriptions, and criteria for acceptable noise exposure is provided in the Technical Reference Report.

### 2.1.2 Noise Sources in Sonoma County

Potentially significant sources of community noise within Sonoma County include:

- All State Highways
- Selected County Arterial and Collector Highways
- Public-use Airports
- Northwest Pacific Railroad (NWPRR) line operations
- Sears Point International Raceway
- Lumber processing operations
- Mineral extraction operations
- Asphalt and concrete batch plants
- Gas well compressors



The Geysers geothermal power plants  
Solid waste landfills and transfer stations  
Agricultural operations  
Concerts, special events and other activities generating amplified outdoor sound

### **2.1.3 Methods of Noise Analysis**

Existing and projected noise level contours are based upon an analysis of source-specific data such as average levels of activity, hours of operation, seasonal changes, and measured noise levels. Analytical methods were used for a number of noise sources including roadways, railines and railroad yards, industrial plants and aircraft.

These methods closely follow the recommendations of the State Office of Noise Control and were supplemented by field measured noise levels. The Ldn contours resulting from the analysis are based upon annual average conditions and are not intended to reflect site specific factors. Noise levels were not analyzed for concerts and special events because of their varied timing, settings and noise levels.

### **2.1.4 Community Noise Survey**

A community noise survey was conducted by Brown-Buntin Associates to measure noise exposure in areas with residences and other noise sensitive land uses. Noise monitoring was conducted at representative sites during three periods of the day and night on May 28 and 29, 1986. Two sites were selected for 24 hour monitoring to establish any trend during this period. The sites, levels, and values at each site are summarized in the Technical Reference Report and on Figure NE-1 on page 391.

The survey results showed typical levels in noise sensitive areas in the range of 40-50 dB Ldn, except along the coastline where the surf produces higher levels. Traffic is the primary background noise generator in most areas. Topography shields some residential areas from noise, lowering ambient levels to 45 dB Ldn or less. In general, areas with noise sensitive uses in Sonoma County are very quiet except along major highways and near airports.

During the noise monitoring period, jet aircraft overflights were noted in areas near Sonoma County Airport. The occasional military jet overflights appear to be at relatively high altitude, reducing the noise impacts of individual overflights. Another noise source noted during the survey was heavy truck traffic on small county roads, usually from timber, agriculture or mining activities. Passage of these vehicles in a rural setting is a significant noise event.

## **2.2 HIGHWAY RELATED NOISE**

The noise analysis developed Ldn contours for State highways and selected major roads in the County. Noise measurements were also taken at five locations along State Highways to verify the method of analysis. Traffic counts and projections were used to obtain hourly traffic volumes. In general, the Federal Highway Administration model used in the analysis slightly overestimated traffic noise levels in Sonoma County.

Traffic data for existing and future conditions were obtained from Caltrans and the Sonoma County Public Works Department. Future traffic volumes are from the Circulation and Transit Element. Traffic noise levels (Ldn) were calculated for existing and projected 2005 traffic volumes.

Noise contours do not account for shielding caused by local buildings or topographical features and should therefore be considered as worst case estimates of noise exposure along roadways. Maps showing these contours are on file in the Planning Department. Noise significant roadways are shown in Figure NE-1 on page 391.

## 2.3 AIRPORT RELATED NOISE

Aircraft noise near airports typically consists of brief, noisy events separated by periods of relative quiet. The California Administrative Code defines the 65 dB CNEL contour around airports as the "Noise Impact Boundary" for maximum exposure of airport noise, but the Air Transportation Element uses 60 dB CNEL as the maximum allowed in residential areas because most of the airports are located in relatively quiet rural areas.

Noise levels around Sonoma County airports were measured in 1986 during preparation of the Air Transportation Element and are described in a technical report for that element. Most of the aircraft noise in the county is currently generated by large numbers of small single engine aircraft. Jets and other large aircraft do not contribute significantly to the present CNEL contours. However, the high noise level of landings and takeoffs by certain large aircraft may cause an adverse impact in quiet rural settings. Thus, the substantial number of business jet and large piston engine operations at Sonoma County Airport extend the Airport's computed 60 CNEL contour, particularly under the instrument approach zones. Projected future levels of airport operations and resulting noise are shown in the Air Transportation Element.

## 2.4 RAILROAD NOISE

Railroad operations consist of through freight and local switching operations by the Northwestern Pacific Railroad. Railroad scheduling varies with seasonal demands and other economic factors, but the main line averages two trains per day several days per week. Through trains usually have one or two locomotives with 20 to 90 cars, depending upon shipping demands. Local trains are generally shorter. Whether the number of railroad operations will change significantly in the future is unknown.

Noise levels from railroad operations were evaluated based upon the worst case assumption of two trains during daytime hours and two trains at night. The CNEL from this level of operation would exceed 60 dBA within about 300 feet of the tracks. At distances of about 100 feet from the tracks, maximum noise levels from trains would range from 80 to 90 dBA. Ldn contours for railroad operations are available at the Sonoma County Planning Department.

## 2.5 SEARS POINT INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

The Sears Point Raceway has both road racing and drag racing. The race schedule includes a variety of professional and amateur road races, motorcycle races, classic car meets, go-kart races, car club outings and drag racing. Sears Point also has a race driving school Monday through Thursday. Most racing events occur on weekend days.

Maximum noise level contours for worst case drag racing activities were prepared. Of all the racing activities, drag racing is the noisiest. Control measures for drag racing are limited to shielding by barriers or topography, curfews, or prohibition of racing.

For other types of racing, mufflers may be a viable means of noise control, if required on a regional or national basis. The SCCA and the AMA, for example, impose muffler requirements on autos and motorcycles competing in events sanctioned by those bodies. Other sanctioning bodies, however, have no such requirement. As a result, it is very important to separate noise sensitive land uses from the raceway.

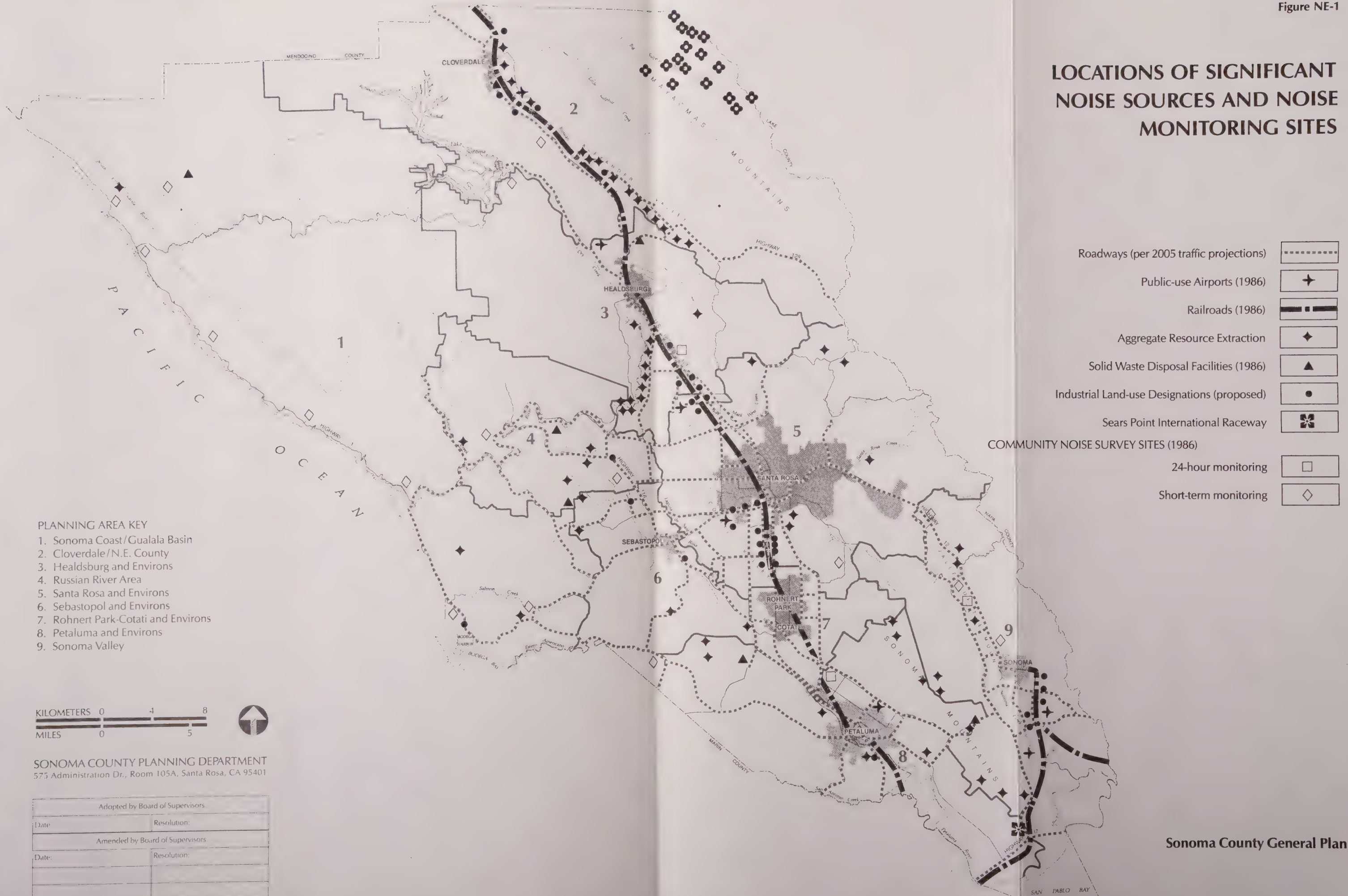
## 2.6 INDUSTRIAL NOISE SOURCES

Noise is part of many industrial processes, even when the best noise control measures are applied. Exterior noise from industrial operations may exceed local standards near noise sensitive land uses.

Performance standards may be applied to proposed new industrial uses to reduce the potential for noise impacts in noise sensitive areas. Measures may also be applied to new noise sensitive uses near existing industrial facilities.



# LOCATIONS OF SIGNIFICANT NOISE SOURCES AND NOISE MONITORING SITES







### 2.6.1 Representative Industrial Sources

The following industrial sources produce the most significant impacts of industrial uses in Sonoma County. These uses are also specific noise sources which should be considered in the review of nearby development proposals. The general locations of these noise sources are shown on Figure NE-1 on page 391. The 60 dB Ldn noise contours for all of these sources appear to fall within site boundaries.

**Wood Processing Operations:** Six large wood processing operations are located in unincorporated areas in the Highway 101 urban corridor, five near Cloverdale and one south of Windsor. Noise sources include fans, cyclones, saws, loaders, sorters, forklifts, chippers and trucks. Most noise impacts occur on weekdays between 6 a.m. and 4 p.m. but some operations occur at night and on weekends, particularly during summer.

**Asphalt Batch Plant:** Operation of a gas-fired asphalt batch plant located south of Cloverdale has resulted in several complaints. The primary noise source at this facility is a gas burner which produces low frequency sounds with a measured noise level of 79 decibels within site boundaries. The computed 60 CNEL contour also is within the boundaries of the site.

**Gas Well:** A gas well located south of Sebastopol was considered a potential noise source when it was installed but has not proved significant. Because the compressor is completely enclosed and the engine exhaust is ducted through the top of the building, the operation is barely audible at 100 feet.

### 2.6.2 Wineries

There are over 120 commercial wineries in unincorporated Sonoma County, varying in production from several thousand to more than a million gallons per year. Wineries are typically located in very quiet rural areas where ambient noise is low. Exterior noise generated at wineries occurs during the crush season and is usually less than 60 dBA at distances greater than 300 feet.

### 2.6.3 Potential New Industrial Noise Sources

Potential new industrial noise sources other than wineries will be located in the areas designated for industrial use. Projects in those locations and in adjacent residential areas will be reviewed for consistency with the performance standards in this element.

## 2.7 NOISE ASSOCIATED WITH MINERAL EXTRACTION

The development of mineral resources is subject to the policies of the Aggregate Resources Management Plan. The Plan indicates areas where mineral resources may be mined. These areas should be considered as potential noise sources during review of proposed noise sensitive uses at nearby sites. Noise sources are either mobile or stationary and could have long term effects on neighboring properties. Blasting may occur during the normal operation of hillside quarries.

Sonoma County Ordinance No. 3437 regulates surface mining and reclamation and includes noise standards which are applied to mining operations. The ordinance allows more stringent requirements when local circumstances warrant additional protection.

The performance standards of this element are complementary to and consistent with Ordinance No. 3437.

## 2.8 NOISE ASSOCIATED WITH GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT

There are over 20 geothermal power plants in the Geysers area in both Sonoma and Lake Counties. Noise is generated by release of steam during drilling and for pressure relief. During steam release, cyclonic separators emit noise levels up to 90 dBA at 50 feet. Both rock mufflers and truck mounted mufflers can be used to reduce steam release noise, but this noise is of short duration and infrequent.

Under normal conditions, operation of power plants produces relatively constant noise from cooling tower fans and trucks. The remote location of the Geysers area and the absence of nearby residential areas limits land use conflicts due to geothermal plant noise. The County has set a noise limit of 65 dBA at the boundaries of each leasehold.

## 2.9 NOISE ASSOCIATED WITH SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid waste disposal and transfer facilities produce heavy equipment and truck noise. At transfer stations, onsite noise may be produced by user vehicles but the most significant noise sources are the haul truck and front loaders. The access roads for landfills and transfer stations may be significant sources of community noise due to the large volume of vehicles.

Noise impacts are limited to daytime. The Central Landfill and Healdsburg Landfill were evaluated for this element. Noise contour maps are available at the Planning Department. The 60 dB Ldn contours are within the site boundaries for both facilities.

## 3.0 NOISE ISSUES, POLICIES AND STANDARDS

### 3.1 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY AND PROJECT REVIEW

Noise level performance standards in Table NE-2 below are to be applied as performance standards for noise producing land uses which may affect noise sensitive land uses and vice versa.

Infrequent single events such as passage of a train, truck, or airplane may interfere with adjacent uses even though the cumulative noise exposure is within acceptable limits. These events call for a single event noise standard. The potential for sleep disturbance is often the main concern in these cases.

**GOAL NE-1** Protect people from the harmful effects of exposure to excessive noise and to achieve an environment in which people and land uses may function without impairment from noise.

**Objective NE-1.1** Provide noise exposure information so that noise impacts may be effectively evaluated in land use planning and project review.

Table NE-2 Noise Level Performance Standards

Category	Cumulative Duration of Noise Event in any one-hour period	Maximum Exterior Noise Level Standards, dBA	
		Daytime 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	Nighttime 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.
1	30-60 Minutes	50	45
2	15-30 "	55	50
3	5-15 "	60	55
4	1-5 "	65	60
5	0-1 "	70	65

**Objective NE-1.2** Develop and implement measures to avoid exposure of people to excessive noise levels.

**Objective NE-1.3** Protect the present noise environment and prevent intrusion of new noise sources which would substantially alter the noise environment.



**Objective NE-1.4:** Mitigate noise from recreational and tourist serving uses.

The following policies shall be used to achieve the above objectives.

**NE-1a:** Designate areas within Sonoma County as noise impacted if they are exposed to existing or projected exterior noise levels exceeding 60 dB Ldn, 60 dB CNEL, or the performance standards of Table NE-2 on page 394.

**NE-1b:** Avoid noise sensitive land use development in noise impacted areas unless effective measures are included to reduce noise levels. For noise due to traffic on public roadways, railroads and airports, reduce exterior noise to 60 dB Ldn or less in outdoor activity areas and interior noise levels to 45 dB Ldn or less with windows and doors closed. Where it is not possible to meet this 60 dB Ldn standard using a practical application of the best available noise reduction technology, a maximum level of up to 65 dB Ldn may be allowed but interior noise level shall be maintained so as not to exceed 45 dB Ldn.

**NE-1c:** Control non transportation related noise from new projects. The total noise level resulting from new sources and ambient noise shall not exceed the standards in Table NE-2 as measured at the exterior property line of any affected residential land use. Limit exceptions to the following:

- 1) If the ambient noise level exceeds the standard in Table NE-2, adjust the standard to equal the ambient level.
- 2) Reduce the applicable standards in Table NE-2 by five dBA for simple tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises.
- 3) Reduce the applicable standards in Table NE-2 by 5 decibels if they exceed the ambient level by 10 or more decibels.

**NE-1d:** Consider requiring an acoustical analysis prior to approval of any discretionary project involving a potentially significant new noise source or a noise sensitive land use in a noise impacted area. The analysis shall:

- 1) be the responsibility of the applicant
- 2) be prepared by a qualified acoustical consultant
- 3) include noise measurements adequate to describe local conditions
- 4) include estimated noise levels in terms of Ldn and/or the standards of Table NE-2 for existing and projected future (20 years hence) conditions, with a comparison made to the adopted policies of the Noise Element
- 5) recommend measures to achieve compliance with this element. Where the noise source consists of intermittent single events, address the effects of maximum noise levels on sleep disturbance
- 6) include estimates of noise exposure after these measures have been implemented.
- 7) be reviewed by the Health Department.

**NE-1e:** Establish building permit procedures to ensure that requirements based upon the acoustical analysis are implemented.

**NE-1f:** Require development projects which do not include or affect residential uses or other noise sensitive uses to include noise mitigation measures where necessary to maintain noise levels compatible with activities planned for the project site and vicinity.

**NE-1g:** Enforce the State Noise Insulation Standards and Chapter 35 of the Uniform Building Code concerning new multiple occupancy dwellings.

**NE-1h:** Prepare and consider a noise control ordinance to regulate existing noise sources as follows:

1. the draft ordinance shall be prepared by County Counsel with the assistance of the Public Health and Planning Departments.
2. consider ONC guidelines and ordinances of other counties

3. the intent of the ordinance shall be to protect persons from existing or future excessive levels of noise which interfere with sleep, communication, relaxation, health or legally permitted use of property.
4. "excessive" levels of noise shall be defined as levels which exceed the standards of Table NE-2 and other policies of the Noise Element.
5. in unincorporated areas of the County, it shall be unlawful to create noise which exceeds the standards of Table NE-2, as measured at the exterior of any noise sensitive use.
6. the noise ordinance may contain maximum allowable levels of interior noise created by exterior sources.
7. the ordinance may exempt or modify noise requirements for agricultural uses, construction activities, school functions, property maintenance, heating and cooling equipment, utility facilities, waste collection and other sources.
8. the ordinance shall include responsibilities and procedures for enforcement, abatement and variances.

**NE-1i:** County equipment and vehicles shall comply with adopted noise level performance standards consistent with the best available noise reduction technology.

**NE-1j:** Encourage the California Highway Patrol to actively enforce sections of the California Vehicle Code relating to adequate vehicle mufflers and modified exhaust systems.

**NE-1k:** Incorporate into the zoning ordinance the standards and policies of the Noise Element where appropriate.

**NE-1l:** Review and update the Noise Element to ensure that noise information and policies are consistent with regulations and conditions within the community.

**NE-1m:** Consider requiring the monitoring of noise levels for discretionary projects to determine if noise levels are in compliance with required standards. The cost of monitoring shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

### **3.2 MANAGEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELATED NOISE**

Transportation sources are by far the most significant sources of environmental noise in Sonoma County. They include vehicular traffic, especially trucks, rail operations, and aircraft overflights in the approach areas to airports. Figure NE-1 on page 391 shows major highways, railroads, and public use airports. An important part of planning for a healthful environment is the avoidance of unnecessary transportation noise. The Circulation and Transit Element includes policies intended to reduce traffic congestion and keep traffic flowing smoothly, thereby helping lower expected future noise levels. The Air Transportation Element includes policies limiting noise exposure from aircraft operations.

**GOAL NE-2** Confine the noise impacts from transportation facilities to the smallest feasible land areas and to assure that any development therein be compatible with the level of noise exposure.

**Objective NE-2.1** Design and manage transportation systems to produce the lowest feasible noise levels and impacts on noise sensitive land uses.

**Objective NE-2.2** Provide highway, railroad, and air transportation systems and services so that the boundaries of their projected 60 dBA noise contours for 2005 are not extended.

**The following policies, in addition to those of the Air Transportation and Circulation and Transit Elements, shall be used to achieve these objectives:**

**NE-2a:** County departments shall make available to the public all maps or data on hand concerning the existing or future noise levels generated by transportation sources.

**NE-2b:** Encourage installation of sound barriers along roadways in non industrial urban areas where an exterior noise level of 65 dB Ldn or more is attained and residences or other noise sensitive uses exist.



**NE-2c:** Consider using truck routing, speed limits, signal timing and other traffic control measures to reduce impacts on noise sensitive uses.

**NE-2d:** Consider measures to reduce peak traffic volumes as a means to reduce highway related noise.

**NE-2e:** Where practical, select route alignments for new roadways and major improvements to existing highways to avoid or minimize noise impacts on noise sensitive land uses.

**NE-2f:** Where practical, include noise control measures in County funded construction of new roadways and additional through travel lanes to maintain noise compatibility with noise sensitive land uses. The goal of these measures shall be to prevent the road project from causing the total exterior noise level to increase above 60 dBA Ldn, as estimated adjacent to dwellings and other "noise-sensitive" primary uses. Where full implementation of such measures is not possible, desirable or appropriate, the reasons for that determination shall be stated clearly by County decision makers.

#### **4.0 NOISE ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM:**

##### **Noise Element Program 1: Incorporate Noise Analysis in to the Permit Review Procedures**

**Program Description:** Special permit review procedures will be established for projects which involve generation of significant noise levels and projects which are located in noise-impacted areas. Acoustical reports may be prepared and mitigating measures required for projects. Noise attenuation measures may be included in the design review manual.

##### **Noise Element Program 2: Adopt a Noise Ordinance**

**Program Description:** Preparation of draft ordinance by County Counsel and Planning and Public Health Departments. Ordinance to include noise performance standards expressed in Table NE-2 on page 489, and others as appropriate. Exemptions, measurement methods, and procedures for variances and enforcement are to be included.











## GLOSSARY

Sonoma County Planning Department  
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**GLOSSARY**

Unless the context clearly implies a contrary meaning or unless a rigid application of the definition would be contrary to the law, the following words, when utilized in this plan shall be construed as follows.

1. Abut: To touch along a border or with a projecting part - to border on.
2. Accessory Building: A subordinate building, the use of which is incidental to that of the main building on the same lot or building site.
3. Adjacent: Having a common border.
4. Adjoin: Lie next to or in contact with.
5. ADT: Average Daily Traffic. The total volume of traffic in trips using a given road during a twenty four hour period.
6. Agricultural Area: See agricultural production area.
7. Agricultural Employee Housing: See Farmworkers Housing
8. Agricultural Land: Land designated within an agricultural land use category.
9. Agricultural Operation: A specific agricultural use or business.
10. Agricultural Production Activities: Those activities directly associated with agriculture, but not including agricultural support services, processing, and visitor serving uses. Activities include growing, harvesting, crop storage, milking, etc.
11. Agricultural Production Area: Land used to produce food, fiber, or plant materials and its immediate surrounding area.
12. Agricultural Support Services: Processing services, maintenance and repair of farm machinery and equipment, veterinary clinics, custom farming services, agricultural waste handling and disposal services, and other similar services.
13. Agriculture: The production of food, fiber and plant materials.
14. Ancillary Use: A use related to and subordinate to the primary use of the land.
15. Aquaculture: The raising of fish or produce in water.
16. Aquifer: A geologic formation that stores, transmits, and yields significant quantities of water into wells and springs.
17. Area of Interest: An area of land surrounding a city but outside of its sphere of influence, within which the city has expressed a desire to review land use.
18. "Area Plan": A planning document which sets forth policies and programs which regulate development in a local area at a greater level of detail than the general plan.



19. Arterial: Medium to high capacity roadway serving primarily through traffic.
20. Assessment District: A district formed through special procedures for the purpose of taxing itself for certain benefits or improvements.
21. Base Zone: As used in the Sonoma County General Plan, a zoning district which describes and regulates the predominant use of the land.
22. Bikeway: Any facility that explicitly provides for bicycle travel. Bikeways are classified into three types denoting a degree of separation from the highway, as follows: Class I (completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles), Class II (a restricted right-of-way designated for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycles), and Class III (a shared right-of-way designated by signing or stenciling on pavement).
23. Biotic: Relating to plant and animal life.
24. Biotic Resource Area: Unique or significant plant or animal communities, including estuaries, fresh and salt water marshes, tideland resources, riparian corridors and certain terrestrial communities.
25. Building Envelope: A defined location or locations on a parcel.
26. "Build out": A theoretical level of development which assumes that every parcel of land will develop to the maximum allowed by a plan or zoning.
27. Channelization: The straightening and/or deepening of a water course for purposes of stream runoff control or ease of navigation. Channelization often includes the lining of stream banks with retaining material such as concrete.
28. Circulation: The movement of goods and people within a region.
29. Clearcutting: A method of timber harvest as defined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.
30. Clustered Development: Development in which a number of dwelling units are placed in closer proximity than usual, or are attached, with the purpose of retaining an expanse of undeveloped or less developed land.
31. Collector: A relatively low speed, low volume roadway which provides circulation within and between neighborhoods which is intended to collect trips from local streets and distribute them to the arterial network.
32. Combining District: A zoning designation which is superimposed over a base zoning district to modify the regulations in the base zoning district.
33. Community Area: Areas of the unincorporated county which include clusters of urban development but which may or may not have urban services. Specifically, these communities are shown in the Land Use Element on Figure LU-2 on page 31.
34. Compatible, Congenial, Harmonious with: As used in the land use and other elements, referring to land uses and types of development that can exist together without creating a conflict.
35. Conservation: The management of natural resources to prevent waste, depletion, destruction, or neglect.

36. Constraints: Impediments to development, such as slope instability, lack of adequate water.
37. Critical Habitat: As defined in the Open Space Element, those biotic communities shown on Figure OS-3 on page 185.
38. Cultivation: The act of preparing the soil for the raising of crops.
39. Density: As generally used in the land use element, the term refers to the number of dwelling units per acre or the number of acres per residential dwelling unit.
40. Discretionary Project or Permit: A project or permit which the decision making body may approve, approve with conditions or deny.
41. Dwelling Unit: A residence containing cooking, sleeping and sanitation facilities used to house the members of a household. Within the meaning of the General Plan, dwelling unit does not include a second dwelling as defined in the Sonoma County Code Section 26-10, nor to Farmworker and Farm Family Housing.
42. Easement: Usually the right to use property owned by another for specific purposes.
43. Easement, Conservation, Scenic, Open Space: An interest in real property whereby open space is secured.
44. Economically Practical: That which is capable of being accomplished in relation to a proposed program, land use or development such that the costs associated therewith do not make the proposed land use or development infeasible.
45. Economically Viable: That which is capable of making a reasonable return on investment.
46. Environment: The circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded. The physical conditions including both natural and man made, which exist within an area including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.
47. Environmentally Suitable: Having minimal or insignificant adverse impact on the environment.
48. Environmental Review: The identification and analysis of the potential adverse impacts of a proposed development on the environment conducted pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code 21000 et seq); the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (Title 14, California Administrative Code Section 15000 et seq); and Sonoma County Code Section 23A-1 et seq.
49. Erosion: (1) The loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or other running water. (2) The gradual wearing away of the upper layers of the earth.
50. Estuary: The lower course of a river or stream where tidal influence is noticeable; the mixing zone of fresh and salt waters near the mouth of a river on stream.
51. Exaction: A contribution or payment required as an authorized precondition for receiving a development permit or offered as mitigation.
52. Farmworker Housing: A dwelling unit or dwelling units occupied by persons employed by agricultural operations, and their dependents.
53. Feasible: See Practical.



54. Fill: A deposit or earth material placed by artificial means; any act by which earth, sand, gravel, rock, or any other material is placed, pushed, dumped, pulled, transported, or moved to a new location above the natural surface of the ground or on top of the stripped surface.
55. Flood, 100 year: The magnitude of a flood expected to occur on the average every 100 years, based on historical data. The 100 year flood has a 1/100, or one percent, chance of occurring in any given year.
56. Flood Control: Measures that are taken to increase the hydrologic capacity of a natural water course or to create new man-made channels or reservoirs to drain and contain precipitation that otherwise exceeds the capacity of the water course, in an effort to reduce flood damage, usually to man made improvements.
57. Flood Plain: The land area adjacent to a watercourse, drainage way, or creek which has been or may be covered by floodwaters. The boundaries of a flood plain are typically described in terms of the magnitude of a flood event such as the "100 year flood plain".
58. Floodway: The portion of a stream channel and the adjacent flood plain that must be reserved in order to discharge the 100 year flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface more than one foot. The Flood Insurance Rate Maps show floodway boundaries for those streams studied as part of that program.
59. Goal: A general statement of a desired end toward which an effort will be directed.
60. Holding Capacity (also, residential holding capacity): See "Build Out".
61. Household: The year round occupants of a dwelling unit.
62. Implementation: Actions, procedures, programs, or techniques that carry out policies.
63. Incidental: See "Ancillary"
64. Infill Development: Development of vacant or under used land (usually individual lots or left-over properties) within areas which are already largely developed.
65. Infrastructure: Public services and facilities, such as sewage disposal systems, other utility systems, and roads. Generally refers to physical improvements as opposed to social services.
66. Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA): Federal designation of boundaries describing an area with known geothermal potential.
67. Land Use: The occupation or utilization of land or water area for any human activity or purpose.
68. Lead Agency: Means the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.
69. Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO): A County commission that reviews and evaluates all proposals for the formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, merger of districts with cities, and setting of spheres of influence. Each county's LAFCO is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve these proposals.
70. Local Area: Any of the unincorporated communities within the county or a geographic area, such as a valley, that is lesser in area than the planning area in which it is located.

71. **Local Area Development Policies:** Policies that apply to a local area, as a sub unit of a planning area, and which provide a greater level of detail or relate special circumstances for specific use or development in a local area.
72. **Lot:** See parcel.
73. **Lot Size, Minimum:** The smallest size parcel which is permitted to be created if a lot can be subdivided.
74. **Major Subdivision:** The division of any parcel or parcels of improved or unimproved land into five (5) or more parcels, pursuant to the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act (Government Code 66410 et seq) and the Subdivision Ordinance (Sonoma County Code, Chapter 25).
75. **Minor Subdivision:** The division of any parcel or parcels of improved or unimproved land into four (4) or fewer parcels, pursuant to the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act (Government Code 66410 et seq) and the Subdivision Ordinance (Sonoma County Code, Chapter 25).
76. **Mitigate:** To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.
77. **Mitigation Measure:** An action or series of actions designed to avoid or lessen the extent of an adverse impact of a project, pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (14 Cal. Adm. Code Sec 15370).
78. **Natural Resource:** Something (as a mineral, waterpower source, forest, or kind of animal) that occurs in nature.
79. **Navigable Stream:** "A stream of sufficient capacity to be used for commercial or recreational purposes and/or capable of being navigated by oar or motor propelled small craft."
80. **Non Conforming Use:** A lawful use existing on the effective date of a zoning ordinance restriction and continuing since that date in nonconformance to the restriction.
81. **Objective:** A specific detailed statement of a desired future condition toward which the County is committed and progress is measurable.
82. **Open Space:** Any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use as defined in Section 65560(b) of the Government Code.
83. **Parcel:** A legally defined lot, or contiguous group of lots, in single ownership or under single control, usually considered a unit for purposes of development. (See "lot").
84. **Peak Hour:** For any given roadway, the daily 60 minute period during which traffic volume is highest.
85. **Performance Standards:** Standards or criteria for regulating or determining the acceptability of certain land uses based upon the performance of the use.
86. **Permitted Use:** A typical land use that is allowed within a particular General Plan Land Use category. A permitted use is considered to be consistent with and to further the objectives of the General Plan. Such a use may also be subject to performance or other development standards and either ministerial or discretionary approval in the zoning ordinance.
87. **Planning Areas:** Nine (9) geographic subunits of the county.
88. **Policy:** Specific statement that guides decision making in order to achieve a goal or objective.



89. Practical: That which is capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, legal and technological factors.
90. Preservation: Restoration or protection from deterioration of features having environmental, cultural, historic, or other resource value.
91. Primary or Predominant Use: The prevailing use of the land.
92. Prime Soils: Soils classified by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service as Class I or Class II.
93. Productive Agricultural Land: Land currently used or capable of being used for the production of food, fiber or plant materials.
94. Public Services: Infrastructure, including roads, sanitary sewers, storm drains and water mains and social services, including police, fire, health, schools, transit, recreation and libraries.
95. Redevelopment Project: An activity undertaken by a Redevelopment Agency set up under state law to revitalize blighted areas as defined by the Health and Safety Code.
96. Responsible Agency: As defined by the State CEQA guidelines, the term Responsible Agency includes all public agencies other than the lead agency which have discretionary approval power over a project.
97. Ridgeline: A line connecting the highest points along a ridge, and separating drainage basins or small scale drainage systems from one another.
98. Right of Way: The strip of land required to build certain transportation and public use facilities, such as roadways, railways, and public utility lines.
99. Riparian: Associated with or dependent upon a river, stream or other water body.
100. Riparian Corridor: In general, the area occupied by rivers or streams and related plant and animal communities. As used in the Open Space Element, the areas occupied by rivers or streams designated on Figures OS-5a through OS-5i and related plant and animal communities.
101. Rural: A comprehensive term contrasting to urban. Those areas not intended for urban development.
102. Scenic Corridor: As designated on Figure OS-2 of the Open Space Element, a strip of land of high visual quality along a certain roadway.
103. Scenic Highway: Those roadways in Sonoma County that have been so designated by the State of California.
104. Scenic Landscape Unit: A landscape of special scenic importance in Sonoma County which provides important visual relief from urban densities.
105. Secondary Use: As used in the General Plan land use categories, a use permitted within a special land use category based on its compatibility with the primary or predominant use therein.
106. Septic System: A sewage treatment system that includes a settling tank through which liquid sewage flows and in which solid sewage settles and is decomposed by bacteria in the presence of oxygen. Septic systems are often used for individual home waste disposal where an urban sewer systems is not available.



107. Setbacks: The distance a building or use must be withdrawn from a road right-of-way, watercourse, parcel boundary or other designated feature.
108. Side Friction: The movement of vehicles outside of the main flow of traffic which may interrupt the efficient flow of traffic such as parking and entering or leaving driveways.
109. Significant and/or Substantial: Important, weighty, distinctive.
110. Special Districts: Districts established under state law and through LAFCO in order to provide special services, such as water and sewer, street lighting and other services, to the residents within the boundaries of the district.
111. Specific Plan: Consistent with the State of California Government Code Section 65450 et. seq, a specific plan is a tool for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a general plan. A specific plan may include all detailed regulations, conditions, design standards, programs, financing mechanisms and/or proposed legislation which may be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of any general plan element(s).
112. Specimen Tree: Means a tree which has departed in some respect from the standard characteristic of the species and has developed a character of shape, size, or branch structure that gives it special interest.
113. Sphere of Influence: The probable ultimate physical limits and service area of a local government jurisdiction.
114. Traffic Analysis Zones: A statistical geographical unit for information related to traffic generation and transportation modeling.
115. Transit: The conveyance of persons from one place to another on a public transportation system.
116. Transportation: The conveyance of goods and people from one place to another.
117. Unincorporated Community: Areas within the county's jurisdiction that have some or all urban services that support urban level densities. These areas are shown on Figure LU-2 on page 31.
118. Urban: Contrasting with rural, pertaining to uses of land typically occurring within cities, such as high density residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
119. Urban Development: Development occurring within urban land use categories (urban residential, commercial, industrial and public/quasi public categories within urban service areas.).
120. Urban Expansion Area: The land located between the existing city limits and the urban service boundary.
121. Urban Fringe: An area adjacent to or in proximity to and outside of an urban service boundary.
122. Urban Services: The full range of public services and infrastructures including sewer, water, police and fire protection, roads and transit etc.
123. Urban Service Boundary: A designated limit to the urban development of the cities and unincorporated communities of the County.



124. **Vegetation Removal:** The cutting, breaking, burning or uprooting of vegetation or the application of herbicide to vegetation, or the covering over of vegetation with earth or the compacting of the soil under, around or over said vegetation. For the purposes of this definition, vegetation means all natural, non cultivated growth of plant life including the root system, the stem, trunk, crown or branches or leaves or blades.
125. **Viable:** Capable of success or continued effectiveness. For land uses, having the apparent physical characteristics necessary to accomplish the use.
126. **Viewshed:** The area visible from a defined observation point.
127. **Zoning District:** A designated section of the County for which prescribed land use requirements and building and development standards are uniform.

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